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'Labour' could form free government

TEL AVIV (AP) — The centre-left Labour Party would gain enough votes in June 23 elections to form a coalition without religious parties, the traditional power brokers in Israeli politics, says an opinion poll published Friday. The poll, conducted by Israeli pollster Mima Zemach for the daily Yediot Ahronot, also shows Labour is gaining at the expense of the ruling, right-wing Likud party. The survey gave Labour 46 seats out of 120 in the Israeli parliament and the Likud winning 31. This is opposed to a poll published on April 10 showing Labour leading 44 seats against 35 for the Likud. Yediot Ahronot political analyst Yehayahu Ben-Porat said the results showed that Labour's gain also was a loss for Likud. Meretz, a combined list of leftist parties, went from 10 seats to 11. The poll, which took into account only a "representative Jewish sample," presumed that Arab parties would gain six seats, as they did in the 1988 elections. This meant that, whereas the April 10 poll showed Labour forming a teetering government together with the left and the Arabs by forming a "blocking group" of 60 seats, Friday's poll allowed for a clear majority of 63 seats. This would mean that Labour would not have to negotiate with the religious parties, which currently hold the balance of power, in order to form a government. This would be a first for a major party in Israeli history.

Strike ends, Lebanese pound strengthens

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon ended a two-day general strike on Friday and the pound, whose slump triggered riots, strengthened after the fall of the country's government. President Minister Elias Hrawi continued the difficult search for a prime minister to succeed Omar Karami. Mr. Karami, faced with the worst labour unrest in years, announced his resignation on Wednesday and in remarks published on Friday ruled out returning as premier. Official sources said Mr. Hrawi would go to Damascus before next week to discuss the formation of a new government with President Hafez Al Assad. Schools, government offices and businesses opened across Lebanon for the first time since thousands of rioters paralysed most of the country on Wednesday and forced Mr. Karami to quit. Trade unions ordered the strike suspended from Friday and set a 10-day deadline on Thursday for a new administration to be formed to tackle economic crisis and rescue the Lebanese pound. Dealers said the pound traded at about 1,700 to the dollar on the unofficial market on Friday against 1,900 on Tuesday, the last day of business. They said the pound, which reached an all-time low of 2,000 on Monday, was buoyed by the fall of Mr. Karami's government.

Iraq reopens devastated foundry

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq, struggling to make goods it used to buy abroad, has reopened a brass foundry heavily damaged during the Gulf war, a newspaper said on Friday. The ruling Baath Party newspaper Al Thawra said General Hussein Kamel Hassan, President Saddam Hussein's adviser for industry, had reopened the factory. "The plant was devastated by the Zionist, Atlantic and American aggression with damage reaching 100 per cent in certain sections," the newspaper said. Gen. Hassan was sworn in on Sunday as a presidential adviser to head a campaign to provide Iraq with consumer goods denied it by the international embargo imposed as a result of its invasion of Kuwait.

China gives exit visas to two dissidents

BEIJING (R) — China has granted exit permits to two prominent dissidents and plans to issue more visas to keep a promise made to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker six months ago, a senior U.S. State Department official said Friday. Labour activist Han Dongfang and dissident Liu Qing have received permission to go abroad, visiting Under-Secretary for Political Affairs Arnold Kanter told a news conference. "I was told the exit permits have been issued to the two individuals," he said. He said he did not know when the permission was granted. "I was told that permission had been granted for several others and that more would follow," said Mr. Kanter, the most senior State Department official to visit Beijing since Mr. Baker's trip last November.

Kuwaiti playwright escapes attack

KUWAIT (AP) — Abdul Hussein Abdul Rida, a prominent Kuwaiti, said Friday he had survived an assassination attempt by unidentified gunmen. Mr. Abdul Rida was on his way to the theatre for the Thursday evening performance of "Sword of the Arabs," which mocks Iraq and the Iraqi invasion, when a car pulled up alongside him and pumped bullets into his car, shattering its windows. He was not injured and went on to the theatre to perform in the long-running hit play. "I don't want to accuse anyone. I don't think it's because of the play," the author told the Associated Press.

Iran signs pacts with Armenia, Azerbaijan

NICOSIA (R) — Iran has signed separate friendship pacts with Azerbaijan and Armenia and agreed to supply natural gas to the two rival former Soviet republics, the Iranian news agency IRNA said on Friday. It gave no details on the pacts signed by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan and Azerbaijan's acting President Yagub Mamedov on Thursday. The pacts were a sideshow to peace talks Mr. Rafsanjani chaired leading to an agreement on a ceasefire to end Azeri-Armenian clashes over disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh (see page 8).

U.N. launches new talks on Cyprus

NICOSIA (R) — U.N. officials launched a new round of talks in Nicosia on Friday saying they hoped for progress to end the 18-year division of the island. "We start this round... hopeful about its possibilities," U.N. Special Representative in Nicosia Oscar Camillon told reporters before meeting President George Vassiliou. "Now we are convinced we have a good instrument in our hands, the latest Security Council resolution, and we know we have the support and interest of the Security Council which is following these developments very closely," he said. The U.N. officials, who arrived a time when the United Nations has expressed concern about lack of progress in ending the feud, will hold talks on both sides of the divided capital and travel to Ankara and Athens next week.

U.S. to block talks on Palestinian 'right of return' in multilaterals

WASHINGTON (R) — Secretary of State James Baker has promised a delegation of American Jews that the United States will block discussions of the Palestinian "right of return" at Middle East peace talks in Ottawa next week. Israel is boycotting the meeting because it objects to the participation of Palestinian "exiles" from outside the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Israelis say they fear the participation of exiles will lead to discussion of the rights of Palestinians scattered around the world to return to their former homes in pre-1948 Palestine and the territories Israel occupied in 1967 or receive compensation. But Mr. Baker told a delegation from the American Jewish Congress earlier this week that Washington did not consider the Ottawa meeting an appropriate forum for discussing this.

Mr. Baker was very clear on the subject, said Mark Pelavin, a member of the Jewish delegation that met Mr. Baker. "Our efforts must focus on the practical and the achievable. We must try to avoid polemics and empty rhetoric," Mr. Baker wrote. U.S. officials, who hoped the talks would spur the peace process, now fear they could have the opposite effect because of the Israeli boycott.

The sources also said U.S. Ambassador to Israel William Harrop told Israeli officials this week that U.S. support for the participation of diaspora Palestinians did not imply recognition of the right of return.

The right of return is embodied in United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194 of December 1948, which was supported by Washington at the time. But when State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler was asked two days in a row whether the United States still supported it, she said she did not know and had been unable to find out. Mr. Tutwiler said Friday more than 20 delegations would attend the arms control talks in Washington including: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, Yemen, the European Community, Canada, Chile, India, Japan, Turkey and Ukraine.

She said the discussions would focus on methods and concepts of arms control, the evolution of the confidence and security-building process and the history of the U.S.-Soviet hotline agreement, the incident.

(Continued on page 5)

Kabul truce holds, but residents still flee

BABUL (R) — A ceasefire between Afghanistan's new government and rebel guerrillas held for a third day on Friday, but residents on the frontline were taking no chances. Families sitting on possessions piled into carts pulled by donkeys or by hand trekked through the lines of fighters to the relative safety of Kabul.

"We don't know what is going to happen. We have to leave," said Kamran as he led a donkey cart carrying his wife and small child away from his Bibisar home on Kabul's southern fringe. Some of those leaving had first fled nearly two weeks ago when fighting began but had come back to retrieve their possessions. Despite days of confrontation, Bibisar remains in the hands of rebel fighters of the Hezb-e-Islami guerrilla group that has refused to support the new Islamic government.

About one kilometre down the road towards Kabul were the government's frontline positions manned by Dostum militiamen. The area, badly damaged in parts by the fighting, was curiously calm on Friday with people moving freely between the two sides. But a Hezb-e-Islami commander sitting by a radio set in the half-built house serving as his headquarters was not very optimistic the ceasefire would hold. Commander Izzatullah accused government forces of breaching the ceasefire by firing anti-aircraft guns at Hezb positions on the hillside above his headquarters during the night. The government's military strongman, General Ahmad Shah Masood, rejected on Thursday the main condition set down by dissident guerrilla chief Gulbuddin Hekmatyar for turning the halt in hostilities into a permanent ceasefire.

Mr. Masood told a news conference that Mr. Hekmatyar's forces were no longer able to seriously threaten Kabul and warned he would push them back if they repeated the rocket attacks that killed more than 50 people in the city in two days this week. He rejected Mr. Hekmatyar's key demand for the Uzbek and Tajik-speaking militias to be withdrawn from Kabul. Down at Bibisar, however, commander Izzatullah and his men said they were determined to rid Kabul of the militiamen who have been widely accused of looting. "The Dostum militia are blindly destroying the people and raping the people and looting. We will never compromise with the Dostum militia who are slaughtering the people."

"Baker spoke of the working groups being technical groups and said the right of return was a political issue to be settled in bilateral negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians," Mr. Pelavin told Reuters. The refugee talks in Ottawa are one of five meetings taking place in the next two weeks to support the main bilateral Middle East peace negotiations.

Israel is also boycotting talks on Middle East economic development in Brussels because Palestinian exiles are invited to these too. But it will attend talks on water in Vienna, arms control in Washington and the environment in Tokyo. Sources close to the talks said Mr. Baker sent a letter to Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy this week trying to reassure him that the meetings would not turn into occasions for bitter denunciations of Israel.

"Our efforts must focus on the practical and the achievable. We must try to avoid polemics and empty rhetoric," Mr. Baker wrote. U.S. officials, who hoped the talks would spur the peace process, now fear they could have the opposite effect because of the Israeli boycott.

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(Continued on page 5)

German public strike ends; focus shifts to industry

BONN (Agencies) — Public employees began going back to work early on Friday after their unions accepted a new pay offer to end Germany's longest and toughest public sector strike. Air traffic and local transport crippled by the 11-day stoppage were quickly returning to normal, officials said. But train services, mail delivery and rubbish collection were expected to need several days to be fully restored.

As the dust settled after a bruising battle between the government and public sector unions, the focus was switching to industry, where token walkouts have already taken place and full strikes over pay demands are looming. The powerful IG Metall Engineering Union, after a week of massive warning strikes, predicted it would be very hard to reach a pay accord if employers did not improve a 3.3 per cent wage offer. "If employers continue with their catastrophic policies... it will be extremely difficult to reach an agreement," IG Metall Deputy Chairman Klaus Zwickel told German radio.

Asked if a full-blown strike was likely, Mr. Zwickel said the employers had only a few days left to decide if they wanted a settlement or a confrontation. Public sector unions agreed on Thursday to an improved offer from employers that will give three million workers a 5.4 per cent across-the-board rise in addition to one-off payments.

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Jordan to present working papers on regional issues

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter with agency dispatches

AMMAN — Undaunted by prospects that Israel may be absent from two working groups in the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace process, Jordan and the Palestinians are going ahead with their own participation in the meetings to be held in the next two weeks. No senior official was available for comment on reports from Washington that Israel had notified the co-sponsors — the U.S. and Russia — and the respective hosts of the working group meetings on refugees and economic development that it would not attend the conferences since Palestinians in the diaspora were also invited to attend. Israel will attend three other working groups — on water, disarmament and the environment, according to the reports.

An official statement issued by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, on Friday named the heads of the Jordanian delegations to the five meetings. It said Faysal Tarawneh will lead the team to talks on economic cooperation to begin in Brussels on May 11 while Jawad Al Anani will head the delegation to the meeting on refugees to begin in Ottawa, Canada, on May 13; Munther Haddadin was named head of the team to the May 12-14 Vienna talks on Middle East water while Abdallah Tougan will lead the delegation to attend the May 11-13 disarmament talks in Washington. Anis Musasher was named head of the delegation to the Tokyo talks beginning May 18 on the environment.

Petra said Jordan would submit working papers at these meetings explaining the Kingdom's position on the respective topics under discussion at these meetings. The papers will also reflect the Kingdom's perception of the future of the Middle East after a just and durable peace settlement is achieved, it added. Meanwhile, it was reported from

Tunis that the Palestinian leadership had recommended Palestinian participation in the Ottawa and Brussels meetings to which the Palestinians have been invited. According to a Palestinian source quoted by the Associated Press, the Palestinian Central Council (PCC) decided that Palestinians will participate in the two meetings. But not everyone at a PCC meeting favoured attending the multilateral negotiations.

Ghassan Al Khashib, a member of the delegation to the Arab-Israeli talks, told reporters he opposed Palestinian participation in the upcoming multilaterals because the bilateral meetings "had produced no concrete results."

The council was to evaluate the five rounds of Arab-Israeli talks during its meeting in Tunis, scheduled to last at least three days. PLO hardliners feel the Arab-Israeli talks have produced little of value. Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat downplayed the divisions within the

PLO and said it remained committed to the peace process. The council is a policy-making body that acts as a liaison between the PLO's Executive Committee and the Palestinian National Council. The meeting began Thursday was called to discuss the peace talks, but it also was expected to review the future of its own leadership a month after Mr. Arafat narrowly escaped death in a plane crash. Israel said earlier this week that its decision to boycott the two regional negotiations did not affect its commitment to the bilateral negotiations it has been conducting with Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and the Palestinians on land-for-peace issues.

Those talks adjourned in Washington last week and are scheduled to resume on an unspecified date. Israel also will participate in upcoming regional negotiations focusing on arms control, sharing water resources and the environment. Israel Television said Israel made

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Sudan seeks to mediate Syria-Iraq differences

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — President Hafez Al Assad agreed Friday to allow Sudan to mediate an end to 13 years of bitter rivalry between his government and Iraq. Sudanese leader Omar Hassan Al Bashir said. Speaking at a news conference following a meeting with Mr. Assad, Lieutenant-General Bashir said a Syrian-Iraqi rapprochement was essential for closing Arab ranks and countering the new world order.

Gen. Bashir is on his second visit to Syria since he took power in July 1989. But it is the first trip since last year's Gulf war during which Sudan and Syria were entrenched on opposite sides. Syria, which has been at odds with the Iraqi government since the 1970s, joined the United States in the military campaign to drive Iraqi forces out of Kuwait last February.

Sudan backed Iraqi calls for an Arab solution to the dispute over Kuwait and opposed the use of force to end the Iraqi occupation of the emirate. Asked specifically if he discussed a Syrian-Iraqi reconciliation with Mr. Assad, Gen. Bashir replied: "Yes, we discussed this matter, and of course President Assad does not object to any effort to bring closer unity among Arab brothers."

"He has agreed to our movement in that direction," Gen. Bashir said. Asked if he planned to visit Iraq, he said: "Our visits to Arab countries have not stopped since the Gulf crisis... and our visits and efforts will continue until the Arab World is unified in the face of its enemies."

He said the new world order was "publicly biased towards the Israeli enemy, providing Israel with sophisticated weapons while exercising pressure on the Arab Nations for the purpose of weakening it."

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Kabul imposes ban on alcohol, orders dress code

KABUL (AP) — The new Islamic government banned the sale and consumption of alcohol Friday and ordered women to dress in "Islamic fashion" — two news signs the country is tilting towards fundamentalism.

The orders read over Kabul radio and television were issued by the 50-member leadership council that came to power last week following the collapse of the Soviet-installed communist regime.

The orders were formal recognition of a practice that had already been imposed on Kabul over the last week by bands of Islamic guerrillas who have taken control of the city.

On Thursday, Afghan Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Masoud vowed to prevent fundamentalist guerrilla chief Gulbuddin Hekmatyar from launching another bid to gain power.

Mr. Masoud and Mr. Hekmatyar agreed to halt two days of heavy fighting in and around Kabul with a three-day truce while they try to work out their differences. The ceasefire agreement between the long-time rivals expires Saturday.

Mr. Masoud engineered a string of military victories that toppled the communist regime last month. Afghans had hoped the truce might lead to peace for the first time since a coup 14 years ago triggered the civil war, which took an estimated two million lives.

But negotiators had their doubts. And Mr. Masoud made no attempt to appear conciliatory. His comments added to fears a truce may break down and reignite fighting for the capital.

"Perhaps for a short time, Mr. Hekmatyar will be able to use his rockets and kill more innocent people," Mr. Masoud said. "But I assure you that soon we will push him so far back that his rockets won't reach the capital."

At least 73 people were killed and nearly 400 wounded earlier this week when Mr. Hekmatyar's forces bombarded this city of 1.5 million people with rockets fired from the hills south of the city.

Afghan Television said the leadership council grouping the leaders of the new government decided that buying, selling or consuming alcohol or narcotics would be punishable under Islamic law — usually flogging.

Alcohol was frowned upon by devout Muslims of Afghanistan under the old regime, but was not illegal and was freely available in urban areas.

A lunch with a leader of the former ruling party last week was accompanied by large glasses of whisky as in the past.

Women were only asked to wear Islamic headscarf, but virtually all those seen in public who might have worn Western clothes and makeup in the past have already covered up.

Many have adopted the Iranian style chador, an all-enveloping piece of cloth that leaves just the face showing.

Two former women ministers arriving for a meeting last week with Interim President Sibghatullah Mojaddidi wearing conservative Western dress and headscarves were turned away by a guard and told to come back properly dressed.

Afghanistan's strongly Islamic new government has made no secret of its intention to introduce strict Islamic law, but at present is more concerned with securing the peace.

Arab writer receives top Israeli award

TEL AVIV (R) — Arab-Israeli writer Emile Habibi accepted Israel's top literary prize on Thursday in a ceremony marked by protests and expressions of support for the author.

Mr. Habibi, 70, is the first Arab-Israeli to receive the prize, awarded every year.

"The future of our political culture in this country depends on our ability to listen to other voices," said Education Minister Zviulun Hammer who handed Mr. Habibi the award.

"Our maturity is marked in our ability to give expression to other positions."

Hardline Jews criticised the education ministry, which presides over the awards, for allowing the prize to go to Mr. Habibi.

Arab-Israeli writers and Palestinian authors from the occupied territories and abroad criticised Mr. Habibi's decision to accept the prize, saying it would improve Israel's image and conceal its repression of Palestinian writers and journalists.

As Mr. Habibi went up to

accept the award, former Israeli government minister Yuval Neeman and right-wing member of parliament Gushon Cohen called out and waved their hands.

Mr. Neeman, who won an Israel prize several years ago for achievements in science, said he was returning his own award in protest.

Supporters of Mr. Habibi, a former member of Israel's parliament, clapped and some stood as Mr. Neeman and Ms. Cohen were escorted from the hall.

Some 20 members of the right-wing Kach movement demonstrated outside the building against the ceremony.

Mr. Habibi, who shook hands with Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir at the ceremony, defended his acceptance of the award saying it recognised the achievements of Israel's 750,000 Arabs and was a step forwards in the struggle for equality with Jews.

He said the award, which carries the cash equivalent of \$8,000, could be used to improve the Arabs' lot under Israel.

Vatican commission urges moves towards Israel relations

NEW YORK (R) — For the first time, a papal commission has joined Jewish leaders in calling for progress in establishing diplomatic relations between the Vatican and Israel.

Lack of formal diplomatic ties between the Vatican and Israel has been a long-term source of friction between Roman Catholicism and Judaism.

The call came in a statement released on Thursday at the end of a three-day meeting in Baltimore between the Holy See Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews and the International Jewish Committee for Inter-Religious Consultations (IJCIC), the Jewish group charged with conducting discussions with the Vatican.

While the two groups recognised that the question of relations was one for the Vatican and Israel to reach agreement on, the joint statement said the two groups "are conscious of the importance of this question for Jewish-Catholic relations in general and express the hope that significant progress in this regard will soon be made."

It was the first time a Vatican group had joined such as call, Jewish leaders said.

It was also the first time two groups held a meeting in the Western hemisphere and according to participants, much progress was made in resolving issues on several fronts ranging from agreement on the need to combat rising anti-Semitism in Europe to opening Vatican World War II archives.

At the meeting, the Holy See Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews also said that the expulsion of the Jews from Spain 500 years ago was an act for which "repentance was the appropriate response of the Catholic Church to this tragic act of intolerance."

The two groups also approved a call made by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago that Vatican archives pertaining to World War II be opened to scholars "on a case by case basis."

The Vatican, however, would have to act on this call before the archives would be opened and currently, it does not allow archives after 1922 to be viewed by scholars.

Jewish leaders have long called for opening the archives to put an end to questions about the Catholic Church's role during the war.

World Jewish Congress President Edgar Bronfman, who headed the Jewish side in the discussions, described the final statement as "an extraordinary document ushering in a new chapter of mutual understanding in Catholic-Jewish relations."

The Vatican has long resisted establishing relations with Israel for several reasons — saying that by doing so it might endanger Christians living in Arab countries and that Israel does not have clearly defined borders. It has also called for Israel to make progress in the granting of Palestinian rights.

The Catholic and Jewish groups met about once every two years. At their last meeting, in Prague in 1990, they jointly "condemned anti-Semitism as well as all forms of racism as a sin against God and humanity."

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Afghans in China start hunger strike

BEIJING (R) — A group of Afghans who fled to China from their country's civil war began a hunger strike in a Beijing park on Friday to press the United Nations to grant them refugee status. About 40 men said they would continue their fast until they got a positive response from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). They have camped out with their wives and children since Wednesday in a small park in front of the U.N. mission in Beijing. The women and children did not join the fast. Some of the Afghans have been in China for as long as two years. Most are educated, and among them are pilots, military officers and doctors. They are not allowed to find work in China and have been supported by the United Nations. "We just want to settle somewhere to have a normal life," said a spokesman for the group, who explained that without refugee status they would remain in limbo. The Afghans say they fear to return to their country where Mujahideen rebels have just taken control from the Soviet-installed government in Kabul. They say they would settle anywhere, including China. UNHCR officials were not immediately available for comment.

Gunmen wound Istanbul politician

ISTANBUL (R) — Gunmen shot and wounded the Istanbul chairman of Turkey's ruling True Path Party (DYP) outside his home on Friday, Anatolian news agency said. The two gunmen fled on foot after attacking Muhlis Divan as he was heading to his car in the residential Acibadem district on the Asian side of the city, the semi-official agency said. Mr. Divan was hospitalised with bullet wounds to his arm. There were no immediate claims of responsibility, but police suspected a far-left urban guerrilla group, the Dev-Sol (Revolutionary Left), was behind the attack. Leftist violence in Istanbul has increased since police killed 11 guerrillas and captured six in mid-April raids on hideouts of the Dev-Sol. Thirteen policemen have been killed since then.

Iraq clamps down on Baghdad nightlife

BAGHDAD (R) — The authorities in Baghdad, once famed throughout the Middle East for its nightlife, are cracking down on nightclubs and bars selling alcohol. "These places corrupt the common sense by organising debased singing parties," the government newspaper Al Jumhuriyah said on Thursday. Iraq's tourist facilities "have turned into shops selling alcohol and nothing more," it added. The newspaper said copyists could not grant licences for new entertainment centres for the remainder of 1992, it added. Similar measures, taken at the beginning of 1992, cut the number of Baghdad's nightclubs from 40 to 18. There were no restrictions on the sale of alcohol in the capital in the past and nightclubs stayed open until dawn with bars offering drinks almost throughout the day and night. Baghdad police shut down more than 100 casinos over the weekend in a fresh bid to clean up the capital of gamblers. The crackdown on alcohol, dancing and gambling started when President Saddam Hussein's half-brother, Wathban Ibrahim Ali Hassan, became interior minister last year. He vowed to end all "humiliating practices" in Baghdad, including the throwing of money at the feet of bellydancers and singers. Ordinary Iraqis face shortages of food and other essentials after almost two years of U.N. sanctions imposed after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

South African flight lands in Cairo

CAIRO (R) — A flight by South Africa's national carrier landed in Cairo on Wednesday — the first in 29 years. A South African Airways Boeing 747 made the non-stop flight from Johannesburg, in six-and-a-half hours with 155 passengers. The airline will operate a scheduled flight a week to Cairo, Egypt, a founding member of the Organisation of African Unity, boycotted South Africa but links started improving after the dismantling of apartheid began.

Niger seeks peaceful end to Tuareg revolt

ALGIERS (R) — Niger's Prime Minister Amadou Cheifou, visiting Algeria to seek unspecified help, pledged on Thursday to find a quick and peaceful end to a Tuareg revolt in the north of his country. Niger has recently intensified military activity against the Tuaregs, but a joint statement issued just before Mr. Cheifou left Algiers said Algerian leaders had been briefed on the situation in northern Niger. "In this regard, (Niger) stressed its will to bring about a rapid peaceful solution of national reconciliation to the service of all Niger's people," the statement said, without specifically mentioning the Tuaregs. Algeria, which mediated an accord to end fighting between the nomadic Tuaregs and government troops in neighbouring Mali, said it strongly encouraged moves towards a peaceful solution. Tuaregs, light-skinned nomads of Berber descent, say they have been oppressed by black-dominated governments in both Niger and Mali. Niger and Algeria also decided to start rapid talks between officials on each side of their common border, the statement carried by the official news agency APS said. Earlier this year, Niger abruptly closed the border.

Ethiopia fears repeat of famine

ADDIS ABABA (R) — Ethiopia said on Friday that it feared a repeat of the 1984 famine which killed at least one million people and appealed to the world for aid. In a statement marking Red Cross Day, Deputy Minister of Health Azab Tamrat recalled that the world had been generous in previous disasters but said now died because it was "too little and too late." She urged the world to be more compassionate to help alleviate the effects of drought and the aftermath of war. The government has to date received only 71,000 tonnes of aid it appealed for last December, about 20 per cent of what it estimates is required to avert disaster. "The likelihood for the continuation of the disaster situation in Ethiopia seems unavoidable. If the 10-year cycle repeats itself, we will soon be facing another disaster whose consequences may be as grave as in 1984-85," said a senior Red Cross official.

Talabani — a master of political intrigue

ERBIL, Iraq (R) — Jalal Talabani says he is worried Baghdad may try to derail his election campaign for overall leader of the Kurdish community by suddenly lifting its six-month economic blockade of rebel-held territory in northern Iraq.

Is Mr. Talabani genuinely concerned or indulging in a shrewdly calculated bit of political rumormongering?

"I am expecting an escalation of Baghdad's propaganda campaign against me," said the 59-year old leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK).

"We have reports they may open the border and allow goods to move," he added.

The words were serious. But around the eyes and the corners of his mouth there was the hint of a smile as reporters scribbled dutifully in their notebooks.

Mr. Talabani — a gleeful mas-



Jalal Talabani

"We are not for... strengthening the dictatorial regime," Mr. Talabani said. "We are in favour of cooperating with the Iraqi opposition, not with Baghdad."

The PUK chieftain reporters and visitors he cannot rule out a last-minute surprise from Baghdad.

"Of course this (lifting of the blockade) would be temporary and allow their (government) agents and saboteurs to move freely," Mr. Talabani said.

U.S. not to send pilots to British 'friendly fire' probe

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States does not plan to send two U.S. air force pilots to Britain to testify in the "friendly fire" deaths of nine British servicemen in a Gulf war air attack, the Defence Department said on Thursday.

An inquest into the deaths opened in Oxford, England, earlier on Thursday and witnesses said a U.S. air force lawyer was pursued by relatives of the victims demanding to know why two pilots involved in the incident would not testify.

The nine British servicemen were killed in the Iraqi desert on Feb. 26, 1991 when an American A-10 tank-busting plane fired on two British warrior armoured fighting vehicles.

At the Pentagon, spokesman Pete Williams told reporters on Thursday that the pilots had earlier agreed to release statements on the incident at the request of families of the British soldiers "provided anonymity was preserved."

Mr. Williams listed several reasons for not sending the pilots, although U.S. Air Force Attorney Colonel Robert Bridge said in Oxford that the American government was not exerting pressure on the pilots one way or the other.

Mr. Williams said that knowing the pilots' identities would add nothing to the issue of determining the cause of death and that release of their names would break a government promise not to make such a disclosure outside official channels.

"We reiterate our deep compassion for the families and loved ones of these courageous soldiers who died defending the cause of freedom," he said.

But "a failure to provide confidentiality to the pilots would subject them and their families to unwarranted scrutiny, merely compounding the grief surrounding this tragic event, which, they share," Mr. Williams said.

"The affidavits, pilots' statements and other documents sent to the coroner represent the complete picture as we know it."

Marriage of convenience brings Somalia food

MOGADISHU (R) — A marriage of convenience between the U.N. and a ragtag band of Somali warriors finally brought relief food to the famished capital this week where thousands are at risk from famine and war.

After months of anarchy, Somalia's feuding warlords are abiding by a ceasefire to allow food through to the capital where at least one hundred children are dying daily.

Under United Nations auspices, about 200 heavily-armed Somali fighters have been hired to protect the first ship of food allowed to dock in Mogadishu since civil war broke out 18 months ago. A previous vessel turned away after it was shelled.

"Looting is professional here. You have to look at the cost of hiring mercenaries versus the loss of billions of dollars of supplies. It's worth it," U.N. delegate Tibebu Haile Selassie told Reuters.

The simple cost of unloading 5,000 tonnes of European wheat, guarding it on the quayside and then taking it under convoy for distribution

in Mogadishu is \$24 per tonne of which half is the cost of "security," aid workers say.

Since Tuesday, hundreds of tonnes have been moved by convoy from the dock to what remains of this once elegant seaside capital. Mercenaries ride shotgun every metre of the way in improvised armoured carriers made from looted jeeps.

Each 500-truck convoy has about 200 men armed with anything from Thompson sub-machineguns beloved of the New York mafia in the 1930s to the ubiquitous AK-47 Soviet rifle, heavy machineguns and recoilless rifles which could demolish a house.

Their cargo may help tip the balance in the fight to prevent mass starvation threatening 4.5 million of Somalia's 6.5 million people, relief workers say.

A natural disaster — the worst drought in 100 years — was already threatening famine when guerrillas who ousted President Mohammad Siad Barre in January last year turned on each other and created a man-made disaster of apocalyptic potential.

"There is famine here. People are dying in numbers the world is not aware of. In Mogadishu alone, children and mothers are reduced to eating old animal hide. It's pitiful," Mr. Tibebu said.

Aid agencies say Somalia is unique. "There's no government, no law, only guns, thousands of them. It's Western," said Medecin Sans Frontieres doctor Michel Leguen.

Behind pock-marked walls of once rich villas, at least 150 small camps have sprung up where mothers and children shelter under improvised huts of acacia branches covered in cardboard.

An uneasy calm punctuated by the occasional unexplained crackle of automatic gunfire now reigns since self-styled President Ali Mahdi Mohammed and rival warlord Mohammed Farah Aideed agreed to a ceasefire in March under world pressure.

Their guns fell silent long enough for the U.N. and aid agencies to arrange for a mercy ship to dock. The previous attempt was torpedoed by shelling, probably at the behest of merchants trying to keep

food prices high, aid workers say.

Something like normality has returned. Unarmed people now walk streets which once meant death at the hands of looters or feuding clansmen. Women sell fruit, cigarettes and the drug qat which brightens the eyes of their warrior menfolk.

General Aideed controls most of the south, his rival the north. On Tuesday, Mr. Ali Mahdi's men crossed the "green line" dividing the capital to collect food from the port and not a shot was fired.

"I am very encouraged, it was a fantastic sight," said U.N. supreme Mohammad Sahnoun, who was appointed by Secretary General Boutros Gbali to help restore peace and fill stomachs.

Mr. Sahnoun thinks the mercenaries could soon be replaced by 500 U.N. guards once Gen. Aideed, hitherto reluctant to cede any area where he holds military sway, gives his agreement.

U.N. officials hope the convoys will carve a "corridor of peace" through the divided city and attune its 1.2 million

people to the concept of feeding instead of fighting.

It would be the first time the U.N. has become involved in guarding food shipments and many African governments see it as an unwelcome development.

"There are many governments who see food as a weapon, and guerrilla groups too. They're not gonna like it," confided a senior U.N. military official.

Later on Thursday, Mr. Ali Mahdi's faction called for the convening of a national reconciliation conference.

Somali radio, which broadcasts from Mogadishu in support of Mr. Ali Mahdi, said his so-called interim government held an extraordinary session to discuss the situation in the country.

Previous attempts to hold such a conference have foundered on Mr. Ali Mahdi's insistence he be treated as a head of state.

The radio said the meeting decided to set up a nine-member committee to "study the modalities" for such a conference.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Les Tortues Ninja
18:30 La Faim Fontaine
19:00 News in French
19:15 Scientific magazine
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Super Bloopers
21:00 Encounter
22:00 News in English
22:20 French feature film

PRAYER TIMES

04:14 Fajr
05:40 Sunrise
12:32 Dhuhr
16:12 Asr
19:24 Maghreb
20:51 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terramotta Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 623383, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Assman International Church Tel. 683226
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811285
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 623824, 659332
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will remain cold, partly cloudy to cloudy and rainy at times. Winds will be southwesterly fresh. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy with a chance of scattered showers and winds will be southerly moderate and seas wavy.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 9/16
Aqaba 16/28
Deserts 9/19

Jordan Valley 14/24

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 16, Aqaba 30 Humidity readings: Amman 85 per cent, Aqaba 34 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Nidal Issa 691011
Dr. Wael Dumali 774800
Dr. Ramzi Mizzawi 890504
Pine pharmacy 661912
Rafid pharmacy 783536
Al Asema pharmacy 632672
Nairoukh pharmacy 636730
Al Salam pharmacy 644945
Shameel pharmacy 637660
BRID:
Dr. Radwan Al Saad (—)
Al Shamsa pharmacy (273825)
ZARQA:
Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Police Complaints 651176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdullah Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111

Dr. Akram Haddad (—)

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Police Complaints 651176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdullah Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 06-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Ama. 642816
Alkhalid Maternity, J. Ama. 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisel 664171/4
Shmeisel Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musallat Hospital 667217/9
The Islamic, Abdali 661275/7
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajira 77101/3
Army, Marjeh 89611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 662240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983523
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986752

Al Hikma Medical Hospital (09)99909

IBRD:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)225555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Don Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (09)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:00 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)
10:00 Damascus (RJ)
10:30 Dhahran (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

07:30 Paris, Damascus (AF)
09:15 Beirut (ME)
14:00 Sana'a (YF)
08:30 Damascus, Paris (AF)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

12:00 Sana'a (YF)
18:20 Damascus, Paris (AF)
20:10 Rome (AZ)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in Jds per kg.

Apple (red) 200/600
Banana 200/400
Banana (Miksumam) 250/500
Beans 700/600
Cabbage 150/100
Carrot 160/120
Cauliflower 260/300
Cucumbers (large) 150/100
Cucumbers (small) 200/120
Eggplant 250/450
Garlic 1000/800
Lemon 200/200
Marrow (large) 250/200
Marrow (small) 200/180
Onion (dry) 240/180
Onion (green) 150/100
Orange 250/200
Pepper (

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Czechs

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Friday sent a cable to Czechoslovak President Vaclav Havel, congratulating him in his own name and on behalf of the Jordanian people and government on his country's national day. The King wished President Havel continued good health and happiness and the people of Czechoslovakia further progress and prosperity.

Bashir sends good wishes to King

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Friday received a cable of good wishes from Sudanese President Omar Hassan Al Bashir, who was flying over Jordan Friday en route to Khartoum, at the end of a state visit to Syria. President Bashir wished King Hussein continued good health and happiness and the Jordanian people further progress and prosperity.

Amman governor reveals spending

AMMAN (Petra) — The government has allocated JD 32,862,500 in 1991 to finance development projects in Amman governorate, according to Amman Governor Issa Al Omari. The governor noted that actual expenditure on development projects in the governorate totalled JD 2,449,490 or 7.4 per cent of the total allocations for that year. Mr. Omari said that Greater Amman zone accounted for JD 16,097,900, followed by Madaba as second zone for JD 6,708,300.

Maani heads editors' housing society

AMMAN (Petra) — The administrative committee of the Editors Housing Society was reconstituted Friday. Mr. Salim Maani was elected chairman, while Mr. Mohammad Said was elected treasurer and Mr. Issa Shawabkeh was elected secretary. The committee also elected Ahmad Tihhan, Ahmad Salameh, Ziad Al Shalleh and Fuad Hussein as members.

French writer contributes to book on rose city

Visit to Petra — a dream come true

By Ica Wahbeh

Jordan Times Staff Reporter
AMMAN — "Stories about Petra" will be the outcome. The French Cultural Centre, in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism in Jordan, are the "brain" behind the idea. And the ones to contribute are several writers, Arabs and French, who through their efforts will make the projected idea come true.

This is how the tenth of the twelve writers to express a personal reflection of the famed city came to be in Jordan. His name is Jean Marie Gustave Le Clezio and taking refuge between the ruins of ancient civilisations befits the tall, blond, shy writer who feels more at ease alone than among people.

Mr. Le Clezio, born in Nice in 1940, is one of the few fortunate writers to earn an early unanimous recognition for his writings. The characters in his works are very much like him and resemble each other. His writing is an accumulative inventory of detailed, fascinating facts.

Literary critic B. Visage, talking about Mr. Le Clezio, said: "There is no other example of a contemporary writer who is not only widely read, but also loved and admired as a living myth."

Mr. Le Clezio's visit to Petra was not the only one to provide him with material for his writing. It was also a fulfilment of a dream. "I was enthusiastic about the project. It was an occasion for me to visit a place I wanted to see for a very long time."

The idea of the short story that will be Mr. Le Clezio's contribution to the book, has somehow crystallised in the writer's mind. It was given to him, the writer says, by an encounter, in Wadi Musa, with a bedouin who expressed the warm desire to travel to Switzerland where he has an old friend. So the theme will be that of "a young boy wishing to go to Switzerland like a Swiss who would like to come to Petra."

The visit to Petra, although "too short to meet people," has profoundly impressed Mr.

Clezio. Always attracted by ancient civilisations, the writer found the Nabatean "very impressive, a people who succeeded to make the Roman and their own civilisations meet." What seems to have particularly drawn his attention is that the Nabateans had a civilisation that "did not represent human beings, human faces." They, he says, have cared to represent "the essentials," like temples and monuments, which is "an expression of purity of thought."

If Mr. Clezio found these representations, to be thorough, he also said they were a well-balanced "equilibrium between the Oriental and the Occidental, as civilisations and as philosophy."

Talking with awe and respect and admiration about the places seen, the writer said about his visit to the Neolithic settlement of Beidha: "It is a very ancient place where bedouins still live. I felt time past and present, life gone by and life still going on. It makes me feel sad and happy, but this is life."

Wadi Mujib, Mr. Clezio saw on his way back, was "more or less what I thought it to be: Huge, hostile, giving a feeling of contact with the past, with Biblical times."

Sure he will come back to Jordan where people are "very friendly and hospitable" and where "nature is incredible," Mr. Clezio reminisces again about Petra, the subject of his next short story: "I dreamt to come to Petra and Petra is like a dream; when you enter the Siq, it is as if you enter a dream. Walking on, you slowly realise that the uncommon scenery you see is actually real. The dream fades away as you can see each mark of the hammer on stone, and hear the sound of people working there."

The writer, who spent three days in the ancient city, has left for France with a dream come true. His essay, part of a collective effort, will certainly make Petra a dream place for many other people. We only hope their dreams will come true too.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan received Thursday the president of the American University in Beirut. Discussion at the meeting centred on the prospect of establishing joint projects and programmes between the academy and Jordanian scientific and technological institutions. Prince Hassan stressed the importance of enhancing cooperation between Jordanian and American universities.



Her Majesty Queen Noor watches paintings of Malaysian artists.

Painting exhibition brings Malaysian art to Jordan

By Nelly Lama

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein inaugurated Thursday a painting exhibition of five major Malaysian artists at the National Gallery of Fine Arts in Jabal Luwaidh. The name of the exhibition "Risalah Dari Malaysia," implies a message of friendship sent to us from the exotic land of Malaysia and its people. It is part of the cultural exchange programme proposed by Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan Ali, President of the Royal Society of Fine Arts in Jordan.

Sharifah Fatimah Syed Zubir, organiser of the exhibition is also one of the five exhibiting artists. Her works are non-objective abstractions, with vibrant colour intensities that make a definite if not loud statement.

Abstract forms move in space, at times independent, intertwined, overlapping or battling together. Opaque and translucent surfaces leave room for the lower areas to show through. The proximity of her intense colours makes them come forward and back without creating great depths.

Her forms and colours create loud rhythms and great harmonies.

Young, philosophical and creative, Ismail Abdul Latiff takes his landscapes into mystical and magical realms. He looks into the new culture of his country while digging for roots in the past. He merges old and new. He depicts the continuous movement of life and the resulting energy.

Intense colour areas, textured by sprinkling, stippling, pointillism, as well as a fidgety interplay of tiny twisting brushstrokes are overshadowed by tumultuous outbursts on the surface. A layer of repetitive and determined brushstrokes forms a transparent curve like a waterjet. It sways speedily along the canvas creating dramatic motion. Dramatic, but not violent, because of the fragility of the brushstrokes, the subtle variety of their shades and the rhythmic finesse of their lit edges.

The recurring moon-like circle in his works is "the symbol of affection, the perfection of life, the ultimate."

Strong light thrusts forward from the depths of darkness, a cosmic force, a journey to the beyond.

For the senior art educator and administrator Ahmad Khalid Dato' Yusof, documents are intrinsic in depicting the human image, calligraphy is too.

"Diplomas, marriage certificates, all kinds of documents are sought by people, but when they obtain them, they forget them and stack them away. As a result their edges fray and they rot. I bring them back to life through aesthetic ways and I express my own experiences through them," explains the artist who places the frayed document in space, with over it, smooth sweeping calligraphy.

"I don't use words as in prayer, I concentrate on the organic flow of the alphabet. I throw them into space. They retain their beauty,

their warm and cool hues, their overlapping and the effects of the Batik technique that I use. My letter travel in space over the document," he says.

When his wife died, he stopped to paint for a couple of years but then realised that "art was still with me." His vivid colours changed into soft pastels. Now he creates iridescent surfaces made with very subtle colour progressions, or misty surfaces with rare hints of depth.

His paintings show the cycle of nature. A tree grows, the leaves dry and fall with time. The rough texture he gives to some floating pieces represents old age.

Khalil Ibrahim started his career as a figurative artist who loved landscapes and portraits. He now renders the human figure on a flat surface. As the figure picks up motion, it gets more abstracted, its solidity dissipates into dissociated forms like the work for the Futurists who depicted speed.

Khalil, a well-known Batik artist is impressed by the infinite variety of Batik techniques. But he finds the Batik colours fade.

"I was working more on Batik in the past but now I prefer oil painting as it can express line and colour more clearly," he says. His exotic colours remind us of his ethnic background.

Revolted by war and its atrocities, Nirmala Shammugalingam shocks her audience by reproducing the horrors of war at their most atrocious. In her works, newspaper clippings merge with the aching figures of crying babies, a mother holding her wounded child, a pieta in her own right! The pathos in these works is tremendous!

Her work of the mid '80s represents a theme familiar to us all, the war in Lebanon. The "Beirut Series" include 12 paintings rendered in Acrylic with a photographic silkscreen technique.

The roughness of rendering, the use of monochrome and the repetition of images create a feeling of eminent death. These pieces are touching and enigmatic. A person finds it hard to move away from them.

"Do not log carelessly lest misfortune befall you IX" belongs to a series that deal with pollution and the environment using local patterns of woven straw, a threefold repetition of an ethnic face with a deep reproachful look and foliage repeated in green (life) and black and white (death).

Masterly expression, ethnicity, personal experience, cosmic manipulation and the creation of movement in space are all elements that this exhibition contributes to us.

Mr. Subell Bisbarat, curator of the National Gallery, reminds us of Her Majesty Queen Noor's statement about the necessity of imbuing culture to our children and to our people. This exhibition is a great opportunity for both.

The exhibition will go on until the 7th of June.

Committee and engineers meet today to finalise programme for Dome of the Rock restoration

AMMAN (J.T.) — A government committee charged with carrying out restoration work on the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem has taken the necessary steps to embark on the implementation of His Majesty King Hussein's directives concerning the project for which a JD 10 million has been allocated, according to Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Minister Izzeddine Al Khatib.

The minister said on Jordan Television that the committee members who reside in Jerusalem along with the engineers appointed to implement the project have been recalled to Amman to hold a meeting here Saturday at the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs in order to finalise the programme of work.

According to the minister, the committee had earlier completed studying the bids offered by various international companies to carry out the restoration project which entails installing an early alarm system against fire and work on the Dome itself.

The committee has already worked out a full executive programme for the restoration work and is about to take practical steps to begin the work, he said.

On Tuesday, the government announced Jordan's total commitment to cover the cost of restoration going on at the Dome of the Rock, noting that the committee's commitment was in line with the Kingdom's policy to support the Palestinian people and to safeguard holy shrines.

Minister Khatib said that Jordan has been committed over the past years to care for the Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, providing for their restoration and repair.

The Al Aqsa Mosque was burnt by a Zionist arsonist in 1969 and the Jordanian government carried out the restoration work through the Jerusalem-based committee.

The minister noted that in the 1980s the holy shrines sustained a great damage, partly from natural causes affecting their structure, which called for measures to be taken for restoration.

The committee, formed in the 1950s, is continuing its work and efforts to provide protection to the holy shrines, the minister

added. He said that the restoration of the holy places was considered by Jordan as a national and religious duty and the Jordanian government was determined to finance the work regardless of the cost.

The committee's chairman, Raef Nijem, said last week that an Italian company had won a contract to carry out the restoration work on the Dome of the Rock but later the committee had to offer the work to a consortium of international firms after the Italian company announced its inability to implement the project.

Mr. Nijem said that Jordan welcomes any Islamic organisations' contributions to help carry out the project.

MAP walk attracts record turnout in third year

By Maha Addasi

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Friday gave the starting signal heralding the beginning of the third annual walk organised by the Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) to raise funds for medical projects and programmes in Palestine, Lebanon, and Jordan.

Although the weather was unusually windy and rainy, the 6-kilometre walk which started at Gate Four of the Hussein Youth City and ended at the Jubeha Entertainment City was attended by over 6,000 participants.

Almost the marchers were Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath Al Hassan, His Royal Highness Princess Raad Ben Zeid, Abdul Majid Shoman, chairman of MAP's board of trustees, other Jordanian officials and members of the diplomatic corps in Amman.

The walk was marked at each kilometre by tables at which wa-



HRH Crown Prince Hassan fires a shot signalling the start of the MAP walk.



ter and candy were given to participants, and as a marker indicating the number of kilometres covered. The tables were supervised by volunteer members of each of 16 companies and banks.

Nadia Al Alami, secretary of MAP's board of trustees and organiser of the sponsored walk, said that the walk was expected to raise funds exceeding JD 284,000, a number more than what was raised last year, although exact numbers were not readily available after the walk.

Reem Najjar, a volunteer at MAP who helped organise the walk said that accurate numbers for funds raised will not be known immediately, especially that many participants who participated with sponsor sheets must receive the money from their sponsors depending on the number of kilometres they walked.

According to Ms. Al Alami, all the money raised by MAP goes entirely to medical programmes and the establishment of new medical projects in Jordan, Palestine and Lebanon.

"In Jordan, MAP established the Hittin refugee camp health centre which houses general practice, dental, pediatric, and obstetric clinics as well as a laboratory. These clinics see up to 1,000 patients monthly," Ms. Al Alami said, adding that the official opening of the clinic took place Thursday, when it was opened by Mr. Shoman in the presence of the Canadian Ambassador and an official from the British Embassy, members of MAP's board of trustees and Hittin Camp officials.

Ms. Al Alami said that three more health centres were being planned for the Baqaa, Jerash, and Soff refugee camps.

Outside Jordan, MAP works in cooperation with medical organisations and helps by training medical staff and purchasing equipment for medical staff and purchasing equipment for medical centres which they help fund, Ms. Al Alami said, adding that MAP Jordan was established because of its geographical proximity to the places in which medical projects are most needed.

"Since MAP, which was established in 1990, was not registered as a society in the West Bank area," Ms. Al Alami said. "This is why we work in cooperation with other establishments." She added that MAP has helped fund 50 projects.

According to Ms. Al Alami MAP is a purely medical society with no political affiliations but because of political aspects it is presently under financial pressure.

"After the Gulf war, MAP lost many of its donors thus putting more pressure on MAP Jordan as the projects it usually funds must continue to be financed," Ms. Al Alami said.

The MAP lottery tickets for the grand prize of a Mercedes 190 among other prizes were drawn Wednesday. His Royal Highness Prince Raad Ben Zeid handed the prize car to the winner Bisher Jardach at the end of the walk Friday.

USAID grants GUVS \$200,000 to finance small-scale projects

AMMAN (J.T.) — The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is granting the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) a sum of \$200,000 to finance small-scale income generating projects by voluntary societies so as to create new jobs, according to an agreement signed in Amman Thursday.

Part of the grant was allocated to the College of Occupational Therapy, according to the agreement signed by GUVS Executive President Abdullah Al Khatib, U.S. Ambassador to Jordan Roger Harrison and USAID director in Jordan in the presence of Social Development Minister Amin Mashqabeh.

This is complementary to a previously signed agreement in 1987 as part of the USAID programme of grants to Jordan.

The first grant of U.S. \$300,000 were used in financing 72 programmes of voluntary societies in Jordan included:

— Upgrading existing services such as nurseries, kindergartens, children parks, and programmes for the handicapped.

— Establishing and upgrading women rehabilitation programmes.

— Small scale income generating projects such as domestic cattle breeding, sewing and embroidery, tricot, hair dressing, traditional handicrafts.

— \$117,000 technical assistance to the College of Occupational Therapy.

'Remember to strictly adhere to traffic rules'

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan is observing world and Arab traffic week which started Thursday with processions in the streets and speeches at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC) where veteran traffic policemen and media men were honoured for their endeavours in the national effort to reduce the number of road accidents in Jordan.

Addressing an audience gathered at the RCC for the occasion, Interior Minister Jawdat Al Shoul said the occasion was a reminder to all citizens to safeguard human life by strictly adhering to traffic rules.

"There is a national duty for every Jordanian citizen to contribute in whatever possible way towards ending the carnage on the roads which has been increasing in the past few years," the minister pointed out.

Mr. Shoul voiced the government's appreciation of all citizens, men of the media, traffic

police and others who exerted strenuous efforts towards reducing the road accidents in the country.

Speakers at the ceremony included Brigadier Awmi Mismar, from the Public Security Department (PSD), who highlighted the need to spread awareness among members of the public to respect traffic rules and regulations in order to safeguard human life and protect the national economy.

Last month, Brigadier Mismar announced that 379 people were killed and 10,136 others injured in nearly 19,000 road accidents involving more than 31,000 vehicles during 1991.

According to Brigadier Mismar, surveys revealed that 50 per cent of the accidents occurred in

the Amman region. Brigadier Mismar told the audience at the RCC that the society has a commitment to deter those rash and reckless drivers who cause losses of life and harm the national economy.

The minister distributed awards to the veteran traffic policemen and media men who played an active role in dealing with road accidents.

Following the celebration at the RCC there was a procession of vehicles through the streets of the capital carrying posters calling on the public to abide by traffic regulations and help reduce road accidents.

Other Jordanian towns will be holding similar celebrations during this week.

Jordan Times
Tel: 667171

WHAT'S GOING ON

- ★ Photography exhibition, entitled "Around the World: People and Things," by Jacqueline Vandervelde at the British Council.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Iraqi artist Amer Al Obaidi at Alia Art Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition of Iraqi artist Ali Al Mandlawi's works, inspired by poems of the great Arab poet Abdul Wahab Al Bayati, at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Rida Hus Hus at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Mohammad Al Ameri at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by five Malaysian artists at the National Gallery of Fine Arts, Jabal Luwaidh.
- ★ Photography exhibition entitled "Double Vision of Jordan" by Bernard Guilhot and Jean-Philippe Reverdot at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "Science and Technology as Forerunners of Industrialisation" (organised by the Geste Institute) at the Jordanian University of Science and Technology (JUST).
- ★ Children's video entitled "The Tailor of Gloucester" at the British Council — 5 p.m.

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Crime must be solved

IT APPEARS that the country is witnessing a steady rise in crime, commensurate with unemployment and poverty. It also seems that the appropriate authorities are looking at this new ominous phenomenon as if there is little that can be done to combat it as long as the economic situation in the Kingdom remains difficult.

Last week a new type of crime hit Amman when a multiple murder was committed against an expatriate family. For some odd reason unrelated to the process of investigation little information has been disclosed by the attorney general's office. Some cynics have even offered the explanation that the police has still no clue as to the identity of the murderer or murderers, something that suggests that the quality of Jordanian crime investigation is not capable of dealing with modern crimes. On the other hand, other sources privy to the investigation conducted thus far have insinuated that the heinous crime has all the makings of a politically motivated crime and is connected with the Gulf war and the situation of Kuwait during its brief occupation by Iraqi troops. If this last interpretation of the events and circumstances surrounding them turn out to be true then Jordanian authorities are called upon to fight this new phenomenon, which is alien to our country, with all the determination and forcefulness we can muster. The last thing that Jordan needs is to become a theatre for politically motivated crimes similar to the ones occurring now daily in the West Bank and Gaza Strip against people who may or may not be cooperating with the Israeli occupying forces.

This is a law and order country with sufficient legal mechanisms to deal with the enemies of the state and is not about to tolerate any extra judicial executions no matter what reasons or people lie behind them. Jordan never had kangaroo-type trials and is not about to have them now under one pretext or another. Too many innocent people have been needlessly murdered under the banner of nationalist causes and in the process causing pain, grief and an anguish to their families as well as to their people. Accordingly the government is urged to strike with an iron-fist against the perpetrator or perpetrators of last week's crime in order to nip in the bud any new wave of crimes which our society will not tolerate. The attorney general is also called upon to release information about the success of the investigation, if any, especially the kind that is not prejudicial to the conduct of the case. The public is enraged, and rightly so, over the case and is entitled to know about it more than is currently being said. And whereas the establishment of a special inquiry team to deal with the situation may give the impression that the government is truly concerned, that in itself falls short of what the public wants. If nothing concrete emerges from the existing investigation, the culprits may conclude that Jordan has become a safe haven for the perpetration of the perfect crime. We have enough socio-economic problems as it is and the last thing that the country needs is that kind of image and situation for ourselves.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily commented on a recent statement by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in which he emphasised his country's total commitment to ensure Israel's security, noting that U.S.-Israel relations were as firm as a rock. What is worth noting here is the fact that the U.S. secretary is singing an old tune while he realises, like other U.S. officials, that it is Israel's behaviour that is causing threat to the security of the whole region, including that of the Jewish state, said the paper. The U.S. secretary realises too well that Israel's defiance of the world community and its determination to expand and swallow up more Arab land constitute the only threat to security and a stumbling block in the path of any peace in the region, the paper added. As to Mr. Baker's remark about the strong U.S.-Israeli ties, it should be noted that to reiterate this fact at a time when Israel is continuing to obstruct the peace efforts can only harm further the peace process and encourage Israel to pursue its obstinate stand, the paper pointed out. It said that the U.S. secretary realises more than any other person that Israel obstructs his own efforts in the peace process by stepping up the settlement programme in Arab lands and by escalating human rights violations and committing atrocities against the Palestinians. Therefore, the paper said, such a statement at this point in time can only prompt the Arabs to draw a big question mark over Washington's real intentions and its credibility. Security for Israel and the other states of the region, added the paper, can only come through respect of the international legitimacy and implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions. Boasting of U.S.-Israeli ties at a time when Israel is known to be an aggressor and an occupier of other countries' lands, said the paper, does not give cause of optimism to the Arab people.

AL DUSTOUR, for its part, commented on the downfall of the Lebanese government, resulting from social disturbances and domestic issues, noting that the resignation of the government coincided with the emergence of numerous social ills and the deteriorating economy. The paper said that the resignation reflects the deep crisis that is plaguing the Lebanese nation, after 15 years of civil strife followed by insecure economy and a troubled social life. The resignation of Omar Karami does not provide the remedy for the many ills facing the Lebanese people and can by no means put an end to the rioting that triggered the collapse of the government simply because the people are hungry and facing a situation impossible to bear, warned the paper. Following the civil war, the Lebanese looked to their relatives and their kinsmen abroad for financial and economic assistance to help the country regain its balance, but all these efforts were in vain, with the result that the economic ills mounted fomenting the disturbances, said the daily. The paper expressed hope that the resignation of Omar Karami would sound the alarm in the Arab World, drawing the Arab states' attention to the danger and prompting them to extend a helping hand to their Lebanese brothers before it is too late.

Jordan is an indispensable partner in the search for peace in the Mideast — NAAA

'There should be a fair and equitable allocation of assistance to all aid recipients in the Middle East'

At the beginning of May, the National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA) presented a testimony on the U.S. administration's foreign aid request for the Fiscal Year 1993. The statement, presented by NAAA Executive Director Khalil Jahshan, before the House Appropriations Foreign Operations Subcommittee, called on the U.S. Congress to approve the administration's request for \$77 million in foreign assistance to Jordan. This is the first of two parts containing major excerpts from the NAAA statement:

Relations with the Arab World

During the past year, the United States and its Arab allies have continued to build upon the close relationships that were forged and strengthened during the Gulf war. The leading role that the United States played last year in response to Iraq's occupation of Kuwait increased the prestige and the responsibilities of the United States in substantial portions of the Middle East. Sadly, however, continuing disputes between the international community and the government of Iraq over the destruction of Iraqi weaponry in the postwar era have diverted attention from the desperate need for humanitarian assistance for the Iraqi people, the primary victim of this conflict.

As the Gulf war has vividly demonstrated, regional stability and the security of the Arab allies of the United States are vital components of the U.S. national interest. The close cooperation between the United States and its Arab allies in the Gulf crisis reaffirmed the benefits that accrue from maintaining substantive economic and military relations with America's Arab friends in the Middle East. The outcome of the Gulf crisis was facilitated by the strong political cooperation and the economic and security assistance relationship that had been developed over the past several decades between the United States and various Arab countries.

But the war in the Gulf had wider implications for stability in the region. It clearly and inescapably demonstrated that protracted conflicts in the Middle East, including the Arab-Israeli conflict and the crisis in Lebanon, must be addressed promptly and

solved expeditiously if peace and stability in the region are to be achieved.

In a real sense, prospects for peace in the Middle East are perhaps brighter now than at any time in recent memory. Last year, we stated that during the postwar period, "the full attention of the U.S. government must continue to be devoted towards establishing a viable and comprehensive peace process that will equitably balance Israel's legitimate security needs with Palestinian national rights." Fortunately, the determined efforts of President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker to initiate a fair and serious peace process have borne fruit. Although much remains to be achieved, historic talks between Israelis on the one hand, and Palestinians, Lebanese, Syrians and Jordanians on the other, have been launched, and the current round of talks in Washington appear to offer a basis for optimism in spite of the lack of a major breakthrough.

NAAA enthusiastically supports the peace process and the administration's efforts to find a comprehensive and durable solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. As Americans of Arab descent, our members yearn for an era in which all peoples in the Middle East can live in a stable and peaceful environment. Successful negotiations between the parties will require a true measure of compromise on all sides. Any formula that seeks to address one side to the exclusion of the other is doomed to fail.

President Bush's firm and forthright stand on the question of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories provided the impetus necessary for the initiation and continuation of the peace process. The de facto linkage of

U.S. loan guarantees and Israeli settlement activities made it impossible for the Israeli government to continue policies that are in conflict with the U.S. national interest without requiring it to make hard choices and sacrifices. We believe that continued active involvement in the peace process by the United States is an indispensable ingredient for a successful outcome.

Economic aid to Arab countries, excluding Egypt, dropped from \$325 million in Fiscal Year FY 1989 to the \$153 million requested by the administration for FY 1993. Adjusted for inflation, the value of the administration's request for Arab countries would be only \$133 million in 1989 dollars, assuming a 3 per cent inflation rate over the next year.

Our specific recommendations concerning the Bush administration's FY 1993 foreign aid requests for Jordan and the West Bank and Gaza are given below.

Aid to Jordan

Jordan is an indispensable partner in the search for peace in the Middle East and the preservation of political and economic stability in Jordan is in the U.S. national interest. Jordan's ability to function as a central actor in this critical phase in the peace process depends in large part upon the willingness of the United States to help it in meeting its pressing economic problems, which were compounded by the Gulf crisis.

Relations between Jordan and the United States were deeply strained during the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. Some of the positions taken by the Jordanian government during the crisis caused the U.S. government and the American people serious concern. Nevertheless, moves in Congress to cut off aid to Jordan have been injudicious. However satisfying they may be emotionally, such actions are certain to be counterproductive and detrimental to the peace process, which the Jordanian government has supported.

The Gulf crisis had disastrous economic and political repercussions in Jordan. It has been esti-

mated that losses to Jordan's economy resulting from the Gulf crisis and its aftermath totaled more than one-half of its annual GNP. The Jordanian economy was seriously undermined as Jordan enforced U.N.-imposed economic sanctions on Iraq. Which had been a major trading partner before the war. Jordanian exports were seriously reduced, while oil costs increased drastically. The economy was further burdened when the Kingdom opened its borders to tens of thousands of refugees fleeing devastation in Kuwait and Iraq. At the same time, large numbers of Jordanians and Palestinians working in the Gulf were displaced during the crisis, increasing unemployment in the Kingdom and drastically reducing remittances from abroad.

NAAA strongly supports the administration's request for a total of \$77 million in foreign assistance, including \$30 million in economic support fund (ESF) funds and \$20 million in PL 480 aid for Jordan for FY 1993. We believe that this amount is the minimum amount necessary for Jordan to rebuild and strengthen its economy and develop employment opportunities for its rapidly growing population. Jordan needs U.S. assistance in order to cope with its \$8 billion foreign debt and balance of payments difficulties that have been exacerbated by the Gulf war.

We also support the request for \$27 million in Foreign Military Financing and IMET assistance that has been requested for Jordan in FY 1993. This assistance would permit Jordan to service U.S.-made equipment presently in its inventory and improve the operational readiness of its armed forces. We urge this subcommittee to recognise that Jordan's legitimate defense needs must be met if stability is to be preserved in the Kingdom and throughout the region.

Aid to the West Bank and Gaza

For FY 1993, the administration is requesting approximately

\$25 million in ESF aid and \$2.6 million in PL 480 aid for occupied West Bank and Gaza — about twice as much as it sought in the previous fiscal year. We applaud this recognition of the importance of increasing aid to the occupied territories, and consider it to be a wise investment for peace. At the same time, we believe this amount to be the minimum necessary to achieve the quality of aid that is needed and we urge this subcommittee to approve the Administration's request in full.

Although \$27.6 million in aid to the occupied territories is justified on its economic merits alone, U.S. assistance at this level would provide an important political message to the Palestinian people as well. At a time when Palestinian representatives are conducting sensitive and delicate peace negotiations with Israel, it is imperative that the United States maintain an adequate level of support for Palestinians in the occupied territories. Given the severe economic disruptions that have taken place under Israeli occupation and the risks that the Palestinians are currently taking for peace, it is time for the U.S. government to make a genuine and concrete commitment to rebuilding the economy of the West Bank and Gaza.

In recent years, the economy in the occupied territories has suffered severe strains as a result of the influx of Soviet immigrants into Israel and the occupied territories (who take jobs away from Palestinians), the overall repercussions from the intifada, the dislocation of thousands of Palestinians in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis, and the continued, though less visible, Israeli suppression of resistance to its onerous military occupation. The desperate economic circumstances prevailing in the West Bank and Gaza fully justify a substantial increase in U.S. aid, particularly in light of the enormous sums being given to Israel annually.

Over the years, private economic development and the Palestinian educational system have been major casualties of the milit-

ary occupation. Palestinians have been denied permission to dig new irrigation wells, discouraged in their attempts to form cooperatives, limited in their planting of trees and vegetables, constrained from selling their produce in Israel and elsewhere, and turned down — or made to wait indefinitely — when applying for licences to start up a business project or construct a building. Palestinian education has been completely disrupted for several years, although Palestinian institutions of higher education had been harassed over much of the nearly 25-year-old Israeli occupation.

The U.S. aid programme to the West Bank and Gaza has assumed even greater importance due to the staggering increases in unemployment that have taken place with the increase in Soviet immigration and the displacement of Palestinians working in the Gulf. While the Israeli government has increased the number of Palestinians from the occupied territories who are allowed to work in Israel, mostly at menial jobs, the numbers of Palestinians employed there remains about 20-40 per cent below the pre-Gulf war level. Because of the economic constraints placed on Palestinian economic activity in the territories by the Israeli military government, these wages exploitative as they may be, are necessary for the economic survival of numerous Palestinian families. Poverty is still endemic in the occupied territories and the 1.73 million Palestinians living there are in great need of assistance.

U.S. aid will continue to develop human resources, foster economic growth, expand employment, and improve health and welfare services, but only if aid levels are sufficient to enable such programmes to endure. ESF money is proposed to fund projects that will improve social services, enhance production in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors, stimulate income generation, cultivate human resources, and promote conditions favourable to private enterprise.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

U.S. domestic policies are root of downtrodden's deep discontentment

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

Most editorials and columns in the daily press last week tackled the disturbances in Los Angeles and other American cities, but they also gave prominence to the fifth round of Arab-Israeli talks and domestic affairs.

What happened in Los Angeles and the other cities of the United States was not a manifestation by the black community in support of a demand to have justice, since destroying public property and committing arson does not help this cause, said Fakhri Kawar.

The columnist, who writes for Al Ra'i, said that what happened in the United States was a real rebellion on the part of the poor American people against the rich and a show of indignation and anger over the U.S. administration's social and economic policies.

He said that 35 per cent of the blacks are unemployed and the majority live in very poor conditions.

The United States is not only condemned by its official statements, but also by its government's behaviour vis-a-vis domestic and external affairs, said Hosni Ayyesh, a columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily.

The writer said that neither the policemen who attacked the black driver nor the judge who absolved the policemen of their crime showed a just spirit, he asked how the U.S. judiciary could do justice to the two Libyans allegedly involved in the Lockerbie affair if Libya decided to hand them over to the American courts.

The scene of White American policemen beating the black driver reminded televi-

sion viewers of Israeli troops beating and breaking the bones of young men in occupied Palestine, the writer said.

The American injustices are not practices against the black people of America, but also against the Third World, and the best example is represented in the blockade imposed on Iraq and Libya, said the writer.

A columnist in Sawt Al Shaab commented on the disturbances in the U.S. cities by saying that U.S. bragging and slogans about democracy, human rights and civilisation went up into thin air with the manifestation of injustice against the black population. Salameh Ekour said that the disturbances foretell a new cycle of violence awaiting the American society, specially if the current unemployment and poverty continue.

For Munes Al Razzaz the Los Angeles disturbances focus the light on racism in the U.S., as an imperialist country, setting an example to the other racist regimes around the world.

The columnist, who writes in Al Dustour, said that the Israeli and the American systems are alike since each practise racism against the blacks, the American Indians and the Palestinians.

The injustice in the United States has put an end to all claims that America is the land of democracy and freedom, he added.

Columnist Tareq Masarweh said in Al Ra'i that the U.S. administration raised the hue and cry when the Chinese military entered the squares of Peking to quell riots. He said

the U.S. administration followed Peking's example when it sent in the troop to quell the black people's revolt in Los Angeles and other cities of the United States.

The black rebellion, he said, is against poverty, social injustices and unemployment that have been plaguing the American society for so long.

America is no more the land of opportunities since the behaviour of the U.S. administration and the white men have ended the so-called American dream, said George Haddad in Al Dustour.

The writer said that the U.S. administration does not value human rights or respect human dignity, but it gives priority to capitalism, to military power and consecrates the rule of the jungle against its own people and those of other nations.

Mohammad Kawash said in Sawt Al Shaab that America celebrated the 500th year of its discovery by a blood bath in the Gulf, continued the celebration by maintaining embargoes on Iraq and Libya and now its white people massacred the black people of America.

The writer predicted that the United States would remain exposed to many disturbances as long as justice is lacking and its leadership behaves in an arrogant and aggressive manner.

Mahmoud Al Raimawi, in Al Ra'i said that the French president was perhaps the only world leader to voice criticism of the U.S. administration for the social and economic policies of the United States which were indirectly responsible for

the black population's rebellion. The writer said that the blacks had to manifest their indignation and vent the long endured repression through rampaging cities.

Dwelling on the conclusion of the fifth Arab-Israeli round of peace negotiations in Washington, Al Dustour columnist Hamadeh Farraneb said that the failure was expected since Israel can offer nothing before the parliamentary elections in June.

The writer said that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and his Likud Party were using the peace negotiations as a means to promote their standing in the coming elections and have no notion of giving up land in exchange for peace.

Sawt Al Shaab daily said that the Israelis pursued their manoeuvres and delayed tackling substance at the fifth round of negotiations and so they caused the meeting to collapse. As long as Israel refuses to recognise U.N. Security Council resolutions or to comply with the will of the world community and the international legality, nothing can be expected from such negotiations, said the paper.

The paper said that the sixth session, scheduled in Rome, should be postponed until the elections in Israel are over.

While Washington has called for the participation of all parties in the coming multilateral negotiations, the Israeli government has been insisting on excluding the Palestinians in the diaspora from such talks, said Al Dustour daily.

Not only did Mr. Shamir make this clear to his audience

while celebrating the creation of the state of Israel, he also announced that the Jewish state will not give up one inch of the occupied Arab lands in any peace treaty with the Arabs, said the paper.

Mr. Shamir has thus openly challenged the international community and defied the Security Council while the co-sponsors of the peace negotiations are doing nothing to bridge the Israeli dreams and defiance.

As long as many Arab spokesmen have reiterated that the talks with Israel were a mere waste of time, why should the Arab governments pursue these talks? asked Abdul Rahim Omar in Al Ra'i daily.

The writer said that there is nothing positive in the outcome of the talks which have been wasted in four rounds of meetings and there is no justification for any Arab to attach false hopes on their outcome.

A columnist in Al Dustour said that the dastard crime committed in Jabal Hussein two weeks ago shocked the Jordanian society and triggered various rumours about many other crimes and atrocities committed by criminals and outlaws.

Issa Shueib said that no one can blame the people for their showing disgust or fear of what has happened, and the government should not satisfy itself by saying that Jordan has no organised crime.

He said that full information about the crime must be announced so that the tension can be defused and the public realise all the facts and take

lessons from them. A columnist in Sawt Al Shaab said all Jordanians have a national duty to boycott the American goods because of U.S. policies directed against the Arab Nation.

Ahmad Dhiban said that the American government is maintaining an embargo on Iraq after its aggression on its people, it is clamping a blockade on Libya and is supporting the Zionist enemy in Palestine. Therefore, he said, there is only one way of dealing with the Americans and that is through boycotting their products.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily criticised the behaviour of the Jordan Press Association board members and said that such behaviour is causing a split among the journalists.

Badr Abdul Haq said that the present president of the association was keeping silent and neutral in the face of the inner disputes over procedures and over the questions of importance of the association that led to the resignation of many of its board members.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily commented on the first national conference for children last week by saying that little is done in Jordan to support the children's rights.

Ahmad Al Misleh said that the capital, Amman, has provided little for the children's recreation, the country has no special council to deal with child-related issues and the concerned authorities have not provided sufficient attention to the well-being of children in Jordan.

Jordan stands tall as model for windy, sunny countries

JURF ALDARAWESH, Jordan (R)—Harnessing the powerful desert sun and wind has brought this Jordanian village out of the dark.

Sheikh Ali Okkar, standing by the solar panels and windmills which power the bedouin settlement's homes, school and mosque, said the lights stayed on while conventional power elsewhere in southern Jordan failed during last winter's freak storms.

"During the snowstorms none of the villages had electricity except us," said Sheikh Okkar, resident in gold-brained robes.

Experts say Jordan's wind and solar power projects could be a model for other developing countries.

tries short on oil but with an abundance of wind and sun.

"There is a real opportunity now because of worldwide concern over the environment—the prospects for renewable energy are quite good," said Anthony Bromley, head of new technologies at the U.N. International Development Organisation.

Mr. Bromley and other experts who met in Jordan recently to discuss commercialising solar and wind power say renewable energy needs state incentives and information campaigns to help expand the market and bring down costs.

"Renewable energy is still regarded very much as a hobby," His Royal Highness Crown

Prince Hassan told Reuters, saying energy alternatives did not seem to be on the agenda of world leaders.

"In our instance for example we have no alternative but to look very seriously at wind and solar energy," he said of the Kingdom, which imports about 5,000 barrels of oil per day, partly to generate electricity.

Scientists who promote solar and wind power as a cleaner and safer alternative to oil nuclear energy say the technology has developed sufficiently for the main priority to be encouraging private investment for wide-scale production.

"In most developing countries traditional energy sources are

highly subsidised and it's unfair competition," said Professor Werner Gocht of Germany's Aachen University of Technology.

Jordan's Royal Scientific Society introduced solar-powered water heaters in the 1980s. Jordanian companies manufacture units that are now used in about 20 per cent of homes.

Although the initial cost of up to \$500 per unit limits the market, over several years they are cheaper than electricity or oil, said the society's Malek Kabari.

Jordan's Dead Sea potash refinery is one of the world's biggest solar-powered projects, using several kilometres of shallow

ponds to focus radiation and evaporate the mineral-rich water.

At Jurf Al Darawesh, advanced German-made windmills and photovoltaic cell panels turn sun and wind into energy which can be stored for use on overcast and calm days. Diesel power is needed for about an hour every day as a backup.

Haifa Al Taher, 19, has a washing machine, refrigerator, television and electric lights powered at a cost of about 2½ dinars (about \$4) per month.

A water pumping station with a Jordanian-built mechanical windmill draws 100 cubic metres of water per day from deep wells for nearby bedouin and their sheep, goats and camels. Unlike its

diesel-powered predecessor, it rarely breaks down and requires little maintenance.

"Jordan not only has long experience in the field but they have developed and adapted their own technology," Mr. Gocht said.

Officials at the Royal Scientific Society would like to see the 10 per cent of remote villages which are without electricity supplied by wind and solar power.

The society plans to establish a renewable energy training centre and is working with countries including Yemen to transfer the technology.

"I'm not saying that we're going to solve all of our energy problems with solar power but it is a solution," said Mr. Kabari.

U.S.: No talks on 'right of return'

(Continued from page 1)

denies at sea and dangerous military activities agreements.

Ms. Tutwiler said the refugee talks

was "designed to examine the scope of the problem of refugee and displaced persons, and discuss data needs and the practical ideas."

Jordan to submit working papers

(Continued from page 1)

the decision not to go to Ottawa and Brussels because Palestinians from outside the occupied West Bank and from Arab East Jerusalem had been invited.

Until now, only Palestinians living in the occupied territories have attended the main peace talks. This means Israel's demand of avoiding negotiations with the PLO.

Israel also argues that Arab East Jerusalem is not negotiable. The U.S. and Russian-sponsored multilateral negotiations are open to countries outside of the Middle East who wish to participate in the peace process.

So far, the Palestinians have not named their delegation, but Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi said last month that the United States and Russia support diaspora participation in the two sessions.

U.S. State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler was unable to confirm Thursday the reports that Israel will boycott the economic development talks in Brussels and the refugee discussions in Ottawa.

"We have had any number of discussions since January at any number of different levels, both here and in Israel, concerning this subject," the spokeswoman told reporters. "So we are well aware of the Israeli view."

"It may be a fine nuance," she said. "I can only tell you that we do not have an official Israeli response." She said the Israeli opposition to the participation of diaspora Palestinians "comes as no surprise to us."

Asked if the United States is concerned the peace process might collapse if Israel boycotts the two working group sessions, Ms. Tutwiler replied: "Heavens, no. As you will recall, in Moscow the Palestinians did not attend. The peace process did not collapse. As you will recall, the Syrian arms cease-fire did not collapse. The peace process did not collapse. So no, that is not our view."

Ambassador Dennis Ross, the State Department's director of policy planning, and Richard Clarke, assistant secretary of state for politico-military affairs, will co-chair the working group dealing with Middle East arms control.

"These first meetings will be seminar-type meetings," Ms. Tutwiler explained. "We expect a general exchange of ideas and sharing of experience at this initial session" on regional arms control issues, she said.

"We do not expect this working group to be a formal negotiation, nor will parties table formal position papers at this session."

"The purpose of this initial working group session will be to organise the working group on arms control," the spokeswoman said, adding that topics such as the agenda, follow-on meet-

ings, and other issues would be discussed.

"We're not yet ready to make public the list of participants," she said.

PCC

(Continued from page 1)

settlement in the occupied territories.

This wing includes the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) of George Habash, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) of Nayef Hawatmeh and a number of independents. The demands of the PFLP and DFLP gained support from unexpected quarters last week when Fatah Central Committee member Hani Hassan, traditionally a right-wing politician, publicly criticised the leadership.

In a lengthy three-part article in the London-based Al Hayat Arabic daily, Mr. Hassan also called for the suspension of Palestinian participation in peace talks unless the PLO secures better terms.

Although he seemed to agree with the leftist opposition on many points, including his unexpected demand for wider representation for the other Palestinian groups, Mr. Hassan will certainly not find much support at the PCC for his call for a closer PLO alliance with Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

But for tactical reasons, it will not be a surprise if Mr. Hassan joined hands with the leftists at the PCC to pressure Mr. Arafat to reconsider his negotiating tactics.

Other members of the Fatah Central Committee, are also expected to at least voice the same demands for suspension of talks.

The second wing will seek a green light for the leaders to continue steering the negotiations without strings that will built room for manoeuvring. The best-known symbols of this trend are Fatah Central Committee member Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) and Dr. Nabil Shaath, who effectively steers the negotiating team during the talks.

The third wing supports the continuation of Palestinian participation but advocates an agreement on a firm negotiating strategy.

The trend is best represented by the Palestinian People's Party (PPP), formerly the Communist Party, which refuses any tactic that does not include a halt to Israeli settlements.

The PPP had suspended its participation in the second week of the fourth round of talks when the

Palestinian delegation decided to submit a Palestinian proposal for interim self-rule. The party's main objection then was that by submitting the proposal the delegation had effectively dropped their demand for an immediate halt to Israeli settlements prior to negotiations over an interim period.

The PPP decided to resume its participation few days before the fifth round when the leadership and the delegation agreed that the team would not agree to any arrangements before a halt to the settlements.

The DFLP wing headed by PLO Executive Committee Yasser Abed Rabo is part of the third wing in its declared demands. But it has always practically sided with Mr. Arafat against the opposition.

The PPP is also unlikely to lead support for the opposition although it will insist that there should be clearly defined and agreed upon red lines that the delegation should not cross.

Mr. Arafat as usual stands in the middle, but he will not allow his power to be challenged by any of these trends.

A heated debate over the peace process, but particularly over the fourth and fifth rounds of the bilateral and the coming multilateral talks, is expected to Tunis.

The opposition believes that the course of the talks have proved suspicious that the Palestinians were continuously forced to heed to Israeli and American terms, especially that negotiations over the interim period have more or less started without any sign of a halt to the settlements.

Mr. Arafat, supported by reports from the delegates, will try to convince the PCC members that the delegation was still holding out even though there was no progress.

Many in the opposition and among independent PCC members were particularly perturbed by Israeli statements during the fifth round that the Palestinians were practically discussing the Israeli plan for interim arrangements that they had rejected in the fourth round.

The delegation's account that was expected to be relayed to the PCC is different. It is true, the Palestinian delegates maintain, that they did start discussing specific points with the Israelis that they have not really conceded to the Israeli plan.

They explain that there was a clear tactical shift to the fifth round of the negotiations which could give the impression that the delegation has practically abandoned its stipulation for a halt to settlements as a prelude to the interim period.

According to accounts of what actually took place at the fifth round of talks, the Palestinians did heed the American "advice" to bring up specific workable proposals instead of insisting on conditions.

But the proposals that the Palestinians raised were all an indirect albeit clear attempt to get the Israelis to reverse laws that have so far facilitated the expropriation of land and control of natural resources.

The Palestinians have asked the Israelis to annul laws that allow the expropriation of lands, block Palestinians from constructing houses and projects that gave the Israeli water company control over the water resources.

In short the Palestinian delegation has tried to achieve its main goals through specific proposals that will at least keep the door open for a transfer of authority from Israel to the Palestinians.

Mr. Arafat is expected to place the delegation's efforts on the table, but he is unlikely to quell the opposition that might not doubt the dedication of the delegation, but fears that the talks are becoming a futile exercise while Israel is consolidating its control over the land.

Internal power politics, which has been at full swing in the last month, are definitely a major factor at the PCC. The practical implications of the ongoing power struggle are that final positions will be determined, to a large extent, by behind-the-scenes negotiations about power-sharing inside and outside the occupied territories.

A clear example of how the struggle can appear to contradict

principled positions on the peace process was the surprising declaration by PFLP and DFLP (Hawatmeh) representatives in the West Bank last week in support of municipal elections.

If the report is accurate, the PFLP and DFLP seem to be counting on capitalising on growing opposition to the peace process in the occupied territories to win the elections and wrest power from the pro-peace talks leadership in Tunis.

In case the PFLP and DFLP do entertain such ideas, they are unlikely to be able to do without a coalition with the Islamic movement, Hamas, which has also supported the municipal elections.

It is premature to judge the final positions of the two groups; most probably the two were just using the declaration to pressure the PCC in Tunis.

Nevertheless, there is rising concern inside the Palestinian movement that the internal power struggle by all sides, without exception, could effectively block a meaningful debate for the PLO to draw a strategy that can at least minimise the damage for the Palestinian people.

German

(Continued from page 1)
Unions, who initially demanded 9.5 per cent, later recommended members to return to work from midnight (2200 GMT on Thursday).

Rafsanjani

(Continued from page 1)
out not having the necessary stamps in my ID booklet," he said.

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Randa Habib's Corner

If you are happy and you know it, clap your hands!

CLAPPING, by and large, should serve as means of showing admiration for and interest in may beautiful things in life. They could range from a remarkable painting to a good soap opera or a magnificent symphony. It also mirrors deep respect to distinguished people who excel in certain fields of life. People also clap to celebrate an achievement.

But it seems that clapping in this part of the world turns into an ever-lasting standing ovation to the ruling clique or just to the man at the helm. One would feel bewildered when watching otherwise respectful personalities and frail men indulge in a non-stop standing ovation to a cult figure. These rituals give the impression that none on this planet can match the great characteristics of the leader in question.

Watching on television a neighbouring station, one feels ashamed seeing the way people pay allegiance to the man in power. The non-stop clapping on any single occasion is so conspicuous that it borders on worshipping.

We think it is about time people in this part of the world pay more attention and admire real beauty and value rather than dedicating "one-track" allegiance to a mere mortal.

We need to appreciate things according to their merit; to know about life and how to pay tribute to those who deserve it. Respect can be shown in different ways rather than through non-stop clapping.



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No blood tests in Barcelona — IOC

SEVILLE, Spain (Agencies) — Blood testing will not be introduced at the Barcelona Olympics, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) said Friday.

The IOC Medical Commission is keen to adopt blood testing to detect the use of erythropoietin (EPO), a hormone drug believed to be used by athletes as a substitute for blood doping.

Blood doping involves the removal of a quantity of blood which is restored to the body just before competition to increase the circulation of oxygen to the muscles. It is known to have been used by athletes to improve performance.

But IOC Vice President Kevan Gosper told reporters that the executive board had decided that the introduction of blood testing to detect the use of EPO would not be considered until after the Barcelona games in July.

"The same rules will apply to dope testing in Barcelona as were applied in Albertville (at the winter games in February)," Mr. Gosper said.

The Medical Commission has not completed a lengthy programme of experiments to verify the procedure to detect the use of EPO.

Medical Commission Chairman Prince Alexandre De Merode said in February that more than 10,000 experimental tests would be needed to ensure there were no significant blood variations among different racial groups.

Prince Alexandre was keen to introduce blood tests at Albertville but met opposition within the IOC.

Mr. Gosper, speaking during a two-day executive board meeting in Seville, said the IOC wanted to avoid any repetition of the "uncertainty and controversy" of

Albertville over the timing of the introduction of blood testing.

He said the executive board would not be able to discuss extensively the implications of blood testing until the feasibility of the procedure had been fully verified.

"It will be raised after Barcelona as part of the natural process of strengthening our attack on cheating," he said.

He did not rule out the possibility that the matter could be discussed at an executive board meeting in Acapulco in November.

Some officials and athletes, especially in the United States, have expressed concern that blood tests could represent a violation of the body.

Prince Alexandre caused a stir on the eve of the Winter Games in Albertville when he suggested

that blood testing could be introduced immediately. But he backed down, saying later that it was necessary to carry out about 10,000 trial tests before starting blood testing at the Olympics.

Keba Mbaye, an IOC vice president and former judge on the World Court, reported last year that blood tests do not represent any moral, legal or religious problems.

"From my point of view, we have still not discussed (the ethical implications) extensively," Mr. Gosper said.

Some officials have suggested that blood tests should be introduced quietly in order to catch unsuspecting athletes.

"You can't look at though you ambush the athletes," said the official, who asked not be identified. "You must work on the assumption that athletes don't cheat, and therefore you take them through the consulting process."

French Cup final could be replaced by charity match

PARIS (R) — Soccer officials said Thursday they had cancelled the French Cup final and wanted to replace it with a charity match between top sides Marseille and Monaco to raise funds for the victims of the Bastia stadium disaster.

The French Soccer Federation (FFF) said the match would be held at the Parc Des Princes in Paris on May 12, providing both teams agreed to take part.

No trophy would be awarded and no ceremony would take place, it said.

"This year's could not be a

final like others," the FFF said. Twenty-six fans were killed Tuesday when a temporary stand at Bastia's stadium collapsed shortly before a cup semifinal between Bastia and Marseille was due to start.

Bastia soccer team said Wednesday they would not take part in a rescheduled match.

"Out of solidarity, players and officials have decided not to play the cup semifinal," Club President Jean-Francois Filippi said.

Marseille officials said they would ask players and supporters to decide whether to play Mon-

aco at the Parc Des Princes.

Most of the Marseille players, who helped with rescue work at the stadium, had said they would not even play in a charity match.

"Out of respect for the victims, the cup should not be allowed to go on. Like my team mates I'm in shock and I shall never forget that I saw," European Footballer of the Year Jean-Pierre Papin said.

"The decision of the players in that there won't be any match at all," he added.

"We can wait for June or July

to do something now. Things should have been done before the disaster," Marseille's Corsican goalkeeper Pascal Olmeta said.

All soccer matches scheduled to take place in Corsica over the weekend have been called off.

On Wednesday, France's national squad, who are preparing for June's European Championship in Sweden, cancelled a scheduled trip to Lisbon to attend the European Cup winners' Cup final between Monaco and Werder Bremen.

"We didn't feel like watching football," coach Michel Platini said.

Al Orthodoxy beats Al Watani, Al Jazireh in mini basketball

AMMAN (J.T.) — The under-13 mini-basketball competition, organised by the Jordann Basketball Federation (JBF), resumed Friday with three matches played at Al Orthodoxy Club's court.

In the first match Al Jazireh defeated Al Watani 41-32. Al Orthodoxy scored a big win of 64-24 over Al Watani in the second match. Al Orthodoxy also won the third match against Al Jazireh 57-34.

The competition will be concluded Friday, May 15. Al Jazireh plays Al Orthodoxy at 9:30 a.m. to be followed at 11 by the Watani — Orthodoxy match.

In the third match Al Jazireh plays Al Watani at 3 p.m. to conclude Jordan's first under-13 mini basketball competition.

hours to visit the team as they trained and to see executives at Liverpool's Anfield ground.

"I'm hoping that the team can go there (Wembley) and play the football they are capable of and hopefully, with a bit of luck, they will have the right result," Souness said.

Asked when he would resume his job as manager, he replied: "If I wake up feeling the same as I do this morning, I'm Liverpool manager as from tomorrow."

He added, laughing: "I wish I was playing."

Souness then flew to London and joined the Liverpool squad at their training centre near St. Albans, north of the capital.

Barnes will be terribly disappointed if he does not play and not only because of missing a Wembley final. He is keen to impress Italian scouts and England manager Graham Taylor.

The English Daily Express national newspaper reported Friday that Italian champions Sampdoria, who have signed his England colleague Des Walker from Nottingham Forest this week, are also interested in Barnes.

Taylor, meanwhile, has to decide whether to include Barnes in his England squad for the European Championship finals in Sweden next month.

Souness optimistic, Barnes faces decision on thigh

LONDON (R) — Liverpool manager Graeme Souness left hospital Friday after heart surgery and was optimistic he would be with his side for the English F.A. Cup final at Wembley Saturday.

"Provided I wake up and I feel as good as I do this morning, I will go," he told reporters waiting outside the hospital on the outskirts of Manchester.

But star England winger John Barnes' appearance in his third F.A. Cup final for Liverpool in five years depended on a crucial test on an injured thigh, Friday.

Caretaker-manager Ronnie Moran, who has stood in for Souness since his triple bypass operation early in April, said: "I'm not going to leave a decision (about Barnes) until Saturday."

Doctors were expected to advise against Souness going to Wembley, but the 39-year-old manager, looking thin but well, said: "I don't think you should believe what you read in the newspapers."

Souness was originally expected to spend only 10 days in the hospital, but because of complications he underwent surgery twice more.

On Wednesday, his birthday, he left the hospital for several

hours to visit the team as they trained and to see executives at Liverpool's Anfield ground.

"I'm hoping that the team can go there (Wembley) and play the football they are capable of and hopefully, with a bit of luck, they will have the right result," Souness said.

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Taylor, meanwhile, has to decide whether to include Barnes in his England squad for the European Championship finals in Sweden next month.

Seles reaches Rome semis

ROME (AP) — Top-seeded Monica Seles took little more than an hour to rout Georgia's Leila Meskhi 6-1, 6-4 Friday, leading the way into the semifinals at the \$550,000 Italian Open.

Seles had won her three previous matches against Meskhi, but the Georgian took Seles to three sets at the Australian Open in January.

But Meskhi seemed to have no chance to get into the match Friday, as Seles pounded two-fisted groundstrokes consistently down the lines, her opponent in futile crosscourt pursuits.

After winning the first set in 30 minutes, Seles appeared to slow and lose concentration at times, but was never threatened.

Chang suffers setback

HAMBURG, Germany (R) — Former French Open champion Michael Chang's build-up to the Grand Slam event in Paris later this month suffered a minor setback Friday.

The American, who triumphed on the Roland Garros clay in 1989, crashed out of the German Open clay-court tournament, outsmarted by Dutchman Paul Haarhuis 7-6, 7-6 in the third round.

But fourth seed Chang, who is ranked sixth in the world, said the defeat in his first tournament on the slow surface this year was not a major blow, to his hopes of repeating his Paris triumph at the end of the month.

"It shows I need to work on a few things. I hope in the (next) two weeks I can get on the right track for Paris," he said.

Haarhuis, ranked 35th in the world, showed greater accuracy from the back of the court than the American and played some superb volleys at the net under pressure in the coolish conditions.

Both players struggled to hold their service in the first set. But when the set went to a tie-break, the Dutchman looked more confident, sealing the tie-break 7-5. Haarhuis broke in the first game of the second set and regularly had Chang under pressure on his serve.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
2 TANNAR HIRSHI
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TABLE PRESENCE

Neither vulnerable. South deals.
NORTH
♠ 9 8 7 5 3
♥ K Q
♦ 10 3
♣ 10 4
WEST EAST
♠ J 10 6 4 ♠ A K 2
♥ 9 5 ♥ 10 8 7 6 3 2
♦ A Q J 6 2 ♦ 5 4
♣ 9 6 ♣ 3 2
SOUTH
♠ Void
♥ A 3 4
♦ K 9 7
♣ A K J 8 7 5

The bidding:
South: West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
2 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass
2 NT Pass 3 NT Pass
Pass Dbl Pass Pass

Opening lead: Four of ♠
Among contemporary bridge players, few have had more impact on the game than Alvin Roth of New York. Many of the methods considered standard today were his brainchildren four decades ago. Besides being a great theoretician, Roth is also a great player. Few can equal his "feel" at the table—a hunch that some untoward action can reap huge dividends. To show what we mean, consider this hand where Roth held

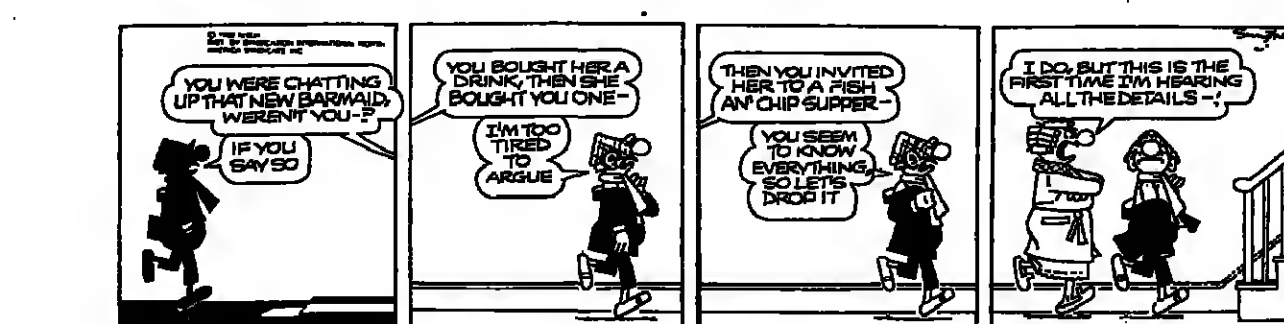
the West cards.

If anyone gave you the West hand

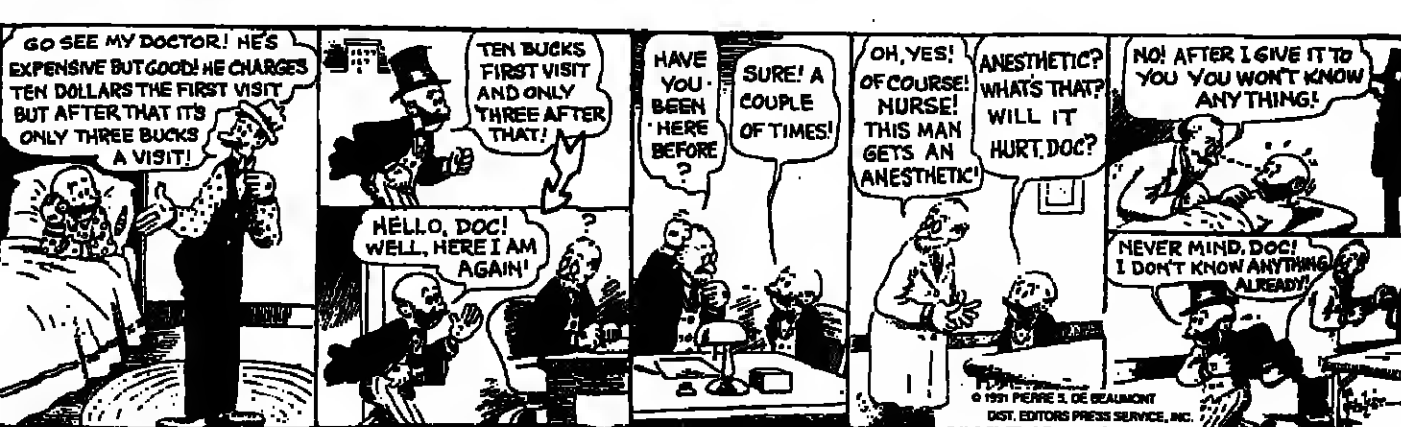
and asked you if you would double three no trump, you would think your questioner had been nipping at the brandy bottle too assiduously. Yet that is exactly what Roth did. The auction made it clear that North-South had stretched to reach game and, while it was possible that nine tricks were there for the taking, it was equally likely a substantial penalty could be in the offing.

Roth hit upon the only lead to ensure the contract's defeat—a spade. Declarer had nine tricks in plain sight, but first had to gain the lead. The best chance seemed to be to rise with the queen of spades, losing to East's king.

Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Patrese concussed in Imola crash

IMOLA, Italy (R) — Williams-Renault driver Riccardo Patrese was taken to hospital for a check-up Friday after being briefly concussed in an accident during testing for the San Marino Formula One Grand Prix. The Italian teammate of 1992 championship leader Nigel Mansell lost control on a bend and went spinning into a wall. There was no immediate word whether the accident would prevent him taking part in the Grand Prix on May 17.

Ardiles to be manager of West Bromwich

LONDON (R) — Argentine Osvaldo Ardiles Friday signed a three-year contract to manage English third division soccer club West Bromwich Albion. Ardiles, 39, replaces Bobby Gould, sacked Tuesday after West Bromwich failed to qualify for the promotion playoffs. They were relegated to the third division for the first time last year. The former Tottenham and Argentina midfielder was sacked in February by second division Newcastle United, who appointed former England star Kevin Keegan. It will be Ardiles' third managerial job after two promising years between July 1989 and March 1991 at Swindon.

Jockey Cordero retires

NEW YORK (R) — Angel Cordero, Jr., who rode more than 7,000 winners in 32 years as a jockey, has announced that he was retiring from riding to pursue a career as a trainer. The 49-year-old Cordero's retirement is a direct result of injuries he suffered in a four-horse spill he was involved in at New York's Aqueduct Racetrack in January. The normally cocky and outgoing Cordero displayed a humility not often seen in him as he addressed a press conference with tears in his eyes. "After a long time of pain and trying to come back, my doctor and I have agreed that it would be best for me to stay off riding for the rest of the year. I had the pleasure of a great career. It was difficult to quit. I'm sorry I have to leave the game before I want, but I'm ready to take the step and be happy to do it."

Criciuma wins again in Libertadores Cup

CRICIUMA, Brazil (R) — Brazilian second division side Criciuma kept up their remarkable Libertadores Cup run when they beat Peruvian champions Sporting Cristal to reach the quarterfinals of the competition. Criciuma, nicknamed the Tigers, beat Sporting Cristal 3-2 in a second round, second leg, match to go through 5-3 on aggregate. They will face Brazilian champions Sao Paulo in the quarterfinals of the South American Club Cup, which has been criticised for allowing two teams from each country to take part instead of just the champion sides. Criciuma, who qualified for the Libertadores by winning the Brazil Cup knockout competition, twice came from behind in Thursday's match.

Ex-Soviet on verge of world title fight

TOKYO (R) — Yuri Arvachakov's ambition to become the first former Soviet boxer to win a professional world title moved closer to fruition Thursday when his manager indicated a challenge for the world flyweight crown was likely in June. Arvachakov, one of six top ex-Soviet amateur fighters who turned professional here in early 1990, is expected to fight World Boxing Council flyweight champion Muangchai Kittikasem of Thailand in Tokyo on June 23. His manager Masaki "mack" Kaneshira refused to confirm the fight was definitely on, saying only: "I have a 90 per cent confidence (in having fixed the title bout), but I would like to make an official announcement on this matter at a news conference in next Monday." The Russian, world amateur flyweight champion in 1989, has been unbeaten in his 12 bouts since his professional debut in February, 1990. Arvachakov is one of three ex-Soviet fighters still in Japan. The other three boxers who signed three-year contracts with Kaneshira's company have returned home after poor performances.

Piquet suffers foot injuries

INDIANAPOLIS (R) — Three-time world driving champion Nelson Piquet of Brazil suffered severe foot injuries when his race car crashed during practice for the Indianapolis 500-mile race. Piquet's car appeared to run over something on the north end of the 2½ mile (4.02-kilometre) track. The car suddenly spun out of control and smashed into the turn wall head on and then rolled several hundred metres down the pavement. Among the rescuers was Piquet's friend and two-time world champion Emerson Fittipaldi, also of Brazil. Piquet was taken first to the track infield hospital and then rushed to a Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis. The track doctors' report indicated there were no life threatening injuries. Piquet, 39, was appearing for the first time at the Indianapolis motor speedway after driving on the world Formula One circuit.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY MAY 9, 1992

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The First Quarter of the Taurus Moon is very poorly aspected and it is more than you are going to find yourself dealing with items that are not on your agenda. Keep cool.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You awaken with a good feeling and much ability to charm others and you would be wise to avoid outside matters of a worldly nature, see good friends.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You are able to quietly make yourself more attractive early, then steer clear of a stranger with odd ideas and later you enjoy your romantic tie.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Be openminded to a recent acquaintance who has charm and put off that practical business matter while later you can be off to new activities.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Worldly vocational interests should preoccupy your time today and tonight but good results are suggested if you are with a time wasting partner.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Many new interests or facets of present outlets can be improved upon by you today so do essential tasks or chores and then get into such opportunities.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Consider well whatever promises or agreements you have made

and attend to them showing appreciation to your benefactor and forego frivolous fun.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Look for some highly dynamic associate who can show you how to gain your outside ambition and don't be so involved in home matters you miss out on these.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You can get much of value in whatever requires your attention on your job while at the same time you are tempted to go off on a wild goose chase.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) An interest in an amusement you have not had before this can bring you much pleasure in the days ahead but don't commit yourself to much expense.

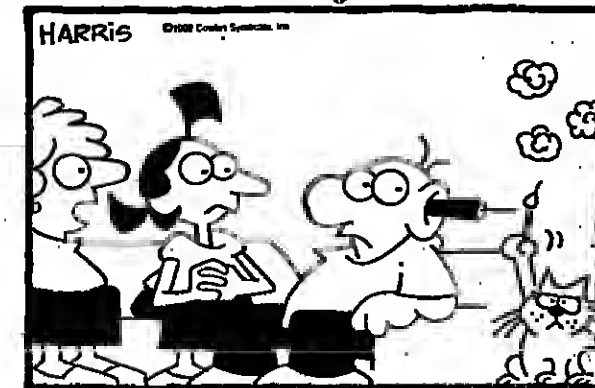
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Busy yourself about your residence by getting conditions there as you want them to be as well as your family wishes and forget personal wishes.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You see ways to put into motion a new budget than can add to your ability to have more of what you want but be sure know the exact cost involved.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You now find that your own views can be best for enjoying yourself even though it means absencing yourself from a long time tie who holds you down.

THE BETTER HALF

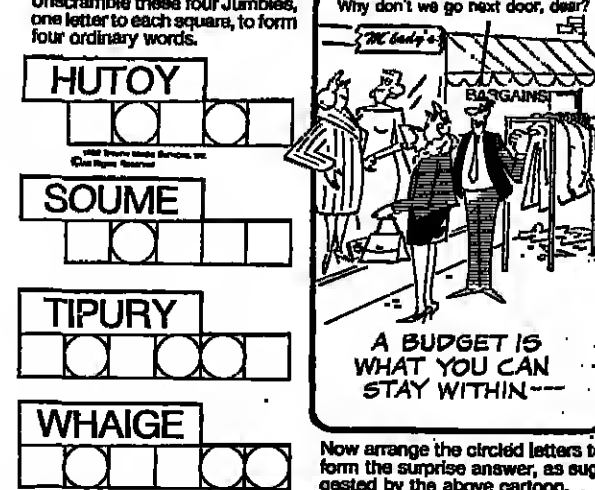
By Harris



"Cats are funny. They either like you or they don't."

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



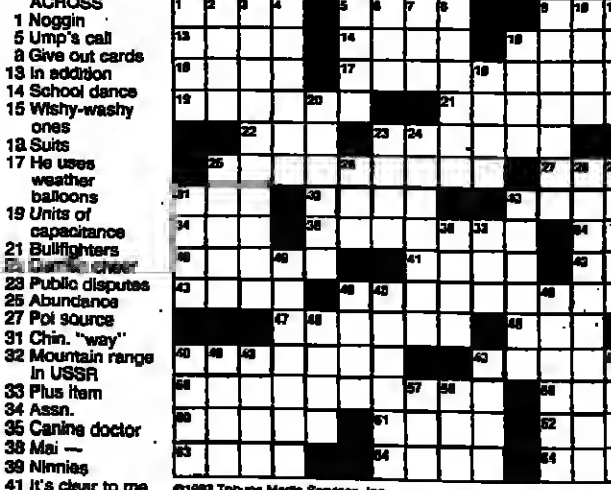
Answer here: WHEN YOU

Yesterday's Jumbles: SANDY ALBUM BREACH NESTLE

Answer: A night owl is a man who stays out late because he has no wife to go home to — OR BECAUSE HE HAS

THE Daily Crossword

by Elizabeth A. Arthur



Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

ACROSS
1 Noddy
5 Lamp's call
8 Give out cards
13 In addition
14 School dance
15 Witty-witty ones
18 Suits
17 He uses weather balloons
19 Units of capacitance
21 Bullfighters
23 Public disputes
25 Abundance
27 Pot source
31 Chin. "way"
32 Mountain range in USSR
33 Plus item
34 Assn.
35 Canine doctor
38 Mtn.
39 Nipples
41 It's clear to me
42 Literary monogram
43 Paroled
44 Supremacy
47 Silvery fish
48 Ely of TV
50 Acacia
53 Lady of Granada
56 He works with precious stones
58 Prayer word
60 Nitrogen
61 Water's item
62 Adolescent
63 Cheese
64 Kind of barrier
65 First name in mysteries
DOWN
1 Golf stroke
2 Charles Lamb
3 Star reader
4 Cash register
5 Health resorts
6 Have being
7 In favor of
8 Overacted
9 Summaries
10 Turk. VIP
11 Lhasa — (dog)
12 WWII craft
15 Had on
18 Kind of wolf
20 Strip
22 Muslim
24 Sect member
25 Gay
26 Wrath
28 Star gazer
29 Empire
30 Mt. Redding
31 Sports clothing
33 Pled — (lodging)
36 Achertine: sulf.
37 Bishopic
40 Provocative verse form
44 Phone or byte
45 Summery
50 Nor. king
51 Designate
52 Roasting stick
53 Eye problem
54 Spout
55 — of Cheves
57 Arroyo
58 Utter

Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar in International Markets		
Currency	NEW YORK CLOSE Date: 5/5/92	TOKYO CLOSE Date: 7/5/92
Sterling Pound	1.7975	1.7952
Deutsche Mark	1.6287	1.6309
Swiss Franc	1.4975	1.5029
French Franc	5.4845	5.4928
Japanese Yen	132.25	132.18
European Currency Unit	1.2605	1.2593

* Unit for \$100.
** European Opening 6:30 a.m. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates

Date: 7/5/92				
Currency	1 MTH	3 MTH	6 MTH	12 MTH
U.S. Dollar	3.87	3.87	4.00	4.43
Sterling Pound	10.12	9.93	9.93	9.93
Deutsche Mark	9.81	9.81	9.75	9.68
Swiss Franc	8.75	8.68	8.50	8.25
French Franc	9.87	9.87	9.87	9.87
Japanese Yen	4.68	4.62	4.56	4.56
European Currency Unit	10.12	10.04	10.06	10.08

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals

Date: 7/5/92				
Metal	UNIT/OUN	UNIT/OUN	UNIT/OUN	UNIT/OUN
Gold	336.70	6.70	Silver	4.06
Palladium	0.0557			0.00560
Platinum	0.0203			0.0204

Other Currencies

Date: 7/5/92				
Currency	Bid	Offer	Currency	Bid
U.S. Dollar	0.684	0.686	U.S. Dollar	0.684
Sterling Pound	1.2274	1.2335	Sterling Pound	1.2274
Deutsche Mark	0.4192	0.4213	Deutsche Mark	0.4192
Swiss Franc	0.4550	0.4573	Swiss Franc	0.4550
French Franc	0.1244	0.1250	French Franc	0.1244
Japanese Yen	0.5174	0.5200	Japanese Yen	0.5174
Dutch Guilder	0.3722	0.3741	Dutch Guilder	0.3722
Swedish Krona	0.1162	0.1168	Swedish Krona	0.1162
Indian Rupee	0.0557	0.0560	Indian Rupee	0.0557
Belgian Franc	0.0203	0.0204	Belgian Franc	0.0203

Other Currencies

Date: 7/5/92				
Currency	Bid	Offer	Currency	Bid
Algerian Dinar	1.7850	1.7950	Algerian Dinar	1.7850
Libyan Dinar	0.0400	0.0500	Libyan Dinar	0.0400
Saudi Riyal	0.1821	0.1835	Saudi Riyal	0.1821
Kuwaiti Dinar	0.1856	0.1866	Kuwaiti Dinar	0.1856
Qatari Riyal	0.2000	0.2150	Qatari Riyal	0.2000
Egyptian Pound	1.7510	1.7610	Egyptian Pound	1.7510
Omani Rial	0.1856	0.1866	Omani Rial	0.1856
Greek Drachma	0.3420	0.3810	Greek Drachma	0.3420
Cypriot Pound	0.8880	0.8880	Cypriot Pound	0.8880

CAR Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	5/5/92	Close	6/5/92	Close
All-Share	145.77*		144.23	
Banking Sector	107.10		107.08	
Insurance Sector	148.91		148.52	
Industry Sector	199.98*		196.51	
Services Sector	186.71		182.43	

* Preliminary 31, 1990 = 100 * REVISED

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.	
One Sterling	1.8028/38
One U.S. dollar	1.1994/99
	1.6315/25
	1.8365/75
	1.5818/28
	33.52/55
	5.4950/4600
	1228/1229
	152.50/60
	5.8820/70
	6.3700/50
	6.3060/110
One ounce of gold	\$334.80

Banking reaches mountains of Oman

MUSCAT, Oman (AP) — Tribesmen of the isolated 3,000-metre Jebel Akhdar mountain of Oman bury their money for safety rather than clamber down the cliffs to the nearest bank four hours away. But recently they heard the bankers were coming to them.

Oman International Bank (OIB) has been given the central bank's go-ahead to open a branch in the fall at Seih Al Qatana, the most densely populated village on Jebel Akhdar (green mountain). OIB marketing chief Malik Himai said.

"There is a tremendous need for a Jebel bank and we are set to play a pioneering role in developing a business community there," Mr. Himai said.

"We will be targeting our marketing services toward the women of the mountain tribes, as they traditionally keep watch over the family money," he said.

"There is no real banking habit as such. Many families put their money in a sack and keep it in a secret place underground."

The new branch — staffed by a manager, bank clerk and guard — will serve the Jebel Akhdar's scattered population of 10,000.

'Made In Israel' label washes away hard Palestinian labour

RAMALLAH, West Bank (R) — In a second-floor apartment, rows of Palestinian women are bunched over sewing machines assembling children's clothing, including labels that read: "Made In Israel."

Through more than four years of a revolt against the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, thousands of Arab workers have been quietly making clothes for Israelis and to fill shelves in well-known foreign stores such as Britain's Marks and Spencer.

"As we are doing business, we are friends," said Abdul Hafez Shuqair, who supervises 25 women sewing for an Israeli company in his small Ramallah factory. "It is not like Arab and Jew."

Clothing is a major Israeli export — \$573 million worth in 1991, almost half of the production — but the label of origin disfigures the work that is done in the occupied territories.

At Mr. Shuqair's factory, Palestinian women sit in rows sewing together pieces of material supplied by the Israeli firm that will then market the finished clothes bearing the label: "Pierre Gaby, Paris, Made in Israel." The Israeli Manufacturers Association says that a few

thousand of the 50,000 workers in the clothing industry are Palestinians.

The Economic Development Group, a Palestinian organisation trying to improve the economy of the occupied territories, estimates that there are up to 30,000.

In any event, there are sound economic reasons for cooperation. Israelis, facing stiff competition from other parts of the world, subcontract work to Palestinians because the basic salary of a little over \$200 a month at Mr. Shuqair's apartment factory is at most a third of the rate that an Israeli would earn.

For Palestinians, subcontracting in the clothing industry provides needed jobs, is one of the businesses that Israeli authorities allow and is relatively cheap to enter.

Yet Israelis make the bulk of the profits.

"We are taking only our wages and the added value is going," said Mr. Shuqair, who earned a master's degree in computer science in Jordan and monitors the productivity of his employees relentlessly.

In the four stages of clothing production — design and marketing, cutting, sewing and finishing for delivery — the Israelis have a lock on marketing while subcontracting much of the rest.

"It is only employment, there is nothing else for us," said Samir Hulaileh, a consultant on the industry with the Economic Development Group. "The profit margin is very low. It doesn't add to the capital."

A lack of capital is a basic reason why Palestinians are confined to subcontracting. Israeli banks will not give them loans.

In contrast, Israeli companies get loans to bridge the time

between purchasing material and selling the finished goods.

Mr. Shuqair said he would need nearly \$650,000 in working capital, an impossible sum for him, to cover all stages of producing the clothing that he now sews.

Mr. Hulaileh estimated that creating one job in food processing costs \$51,000 — versus only \$8,000 for the modest machinery needed for a job in clothing. Mr. Shuqair placed his investment at a mere 80,000 shekels, about \$33,000.

Palestinian subcontractors are dependent on Israel, living from contract to contract and paid per piece. The vulnerability is compounded by a military occupation that has imposed extended curfews, creating havoc with production schedules.

Even the most successful Palestinian in the industry, Hasan Badran, finds any attempts to

move beyond subcontracting is difficult.

"I can make anything you want," said Mr. Badran, whose 250-worker factory in the town of Tulkarm has made him rich. "But no one can come to my factory. They don't know what we can do."

The dream of ambitious businessmen like Mr. Badran is to sell directly to European and U.S. customers, taking advantage of free trade agreements that allow Israel to evade the clothing quotas facing Asian producers. But bypassing the Israeli middleman will not be easy.

Although Mr. Badran pulls cards from his briefcase to show that he has subcontracted on clothing for such famous labels as Calvin Klein, Liz Claiborne and Marks and Spencer, he says it takes about two months to obtain Israeli permission to fly abroad on business trips.

Russia marches on to market economy as complaints rise

MOSCOW (R) — Russia freed vodka prices and raised interest rates Thursday in its march to a market economy, but doctors and teachers cried out for more pay to cope with tough economic conditions.

"You cannot hope for a high quality of education if teachers live in poverty," education union official Marina Ivanova told a Moscow news conference.

Health care union worker Vyacheslav Nikulin echoed her plea. "We are demanding a 10-fold increase in salaries," he said. The minimum wage for health workers was just 342 rubles a month, about \$3.40 at the central bank rate.

Doctors and other health workers, traditionally among Russia's lowest-paid, started a campaign of industrial action last month in their battle for better pay and conditions.

Hundreds of doctors are already refusing to see visitors to outpatient clinics, the second stage in the campaign which

started when doctors refused to sign sick notes and other medical documents.

Mr. Nikulin said he did not expect a move to the third stage of the dispute — a halt to all medical aid. "The third stage will not happen in Moscow," he said.

"We will approach the situation objectively. We will stay doctors," he pointed out.

The doctors and other public sector employees on fixed salaries have been especially hard hit by the government's tough economic reform plan.

The reforms, a key element in Russia's bid to transform its battered economy from communism to capitalism, started in January when the government removed most price controls, sending prices for goods and services spiralling out of reach.

Inflation is still between 30 and 40 per cent a month. Although the government hopes to force the level down as the year goes on.

But vodka prices were fixed at

50 rubles per half-litre bottle other prices rose freely, a decision which tempted sellers onto unofficial street markets where they could get 120 rubles or more.

"We last had vodka on sale a week ago. Two thousand bottles were sold out in less than no time. It was a real disaster as usual," said Tatyana Sergeeva, manager of a tiny liquor shop in the centre of Moscow.

She said eager drinkers had stormed her tiny store, forcing the door out of shape shattering windows.

The government formally freed vodka prices Thursday, although it retained a state monopoly on production dating back to Tsarist times, ITAR-TASS news agency said.

But Russia surrendered its monopoly over production of wine and beer, throwing the field open to private enterprise.

In a separate development, Russia's savings banks raised the

interest rates they offer investors by up to 50 per cent, although interest rates remain well below inflation levels.

The savings banks currently offer between three and 15 per cent interest on investments, up from levels as low as 1.5 per cent at the start of the year.

Government officials see high interest rates as a way to make the ruble attractive, an important step in making the currency convertible on world markets.

Officials said Wednesday Russia would let the ruble trade freely against other currencies from July 1 in the first stage towards convertibility.

The country is also working hard to rein in the budget deficit, put at a massive 18 per cent of gross national product last year.

"By 1994 we plan a budget deficit of two or three per cent of gross national product," government official Konstantin Kagalovsky said Wednesday. "Inflation will be cut to three or four per cent."

France backs up growth with credit ease

PARIS (R) — The Bank of France acted to cut French industry's borrowing costs Thursday, allowing Finance Minister Michel Sapin to take the moral high ground when he asks his European counterparts this weekend to do more for growth.

The central bank reduced the amount of reserves that the clearing banks have to leave with it, allowing them to cut base rates by

half a percentage point to 9.85 per cent.

Mr. Sapin said the easing in credit conditions was made possible by the strength of the franc over recent weeks.

Prudently, the Bank of France has not undermined that rise by cutting its key intervention rate — it was forced into an embarrassing about-turn last December when the franc came under attack

after it cut the rate — but the effect is the same.

The commercial banks are getting back some 31 billion francs (\$5.63 billion) that they have had to leave, unremunerated, with the Bank of France, and, playing the game, they immediately passed on the saving to their customers in the form of lower rates.

The cut in rates was applauded by the French Banking Association (AFB).

"Credit for businesses is going to be cheaper. That is a considerable factor which will help economic recovery," it said.

The AFB has long campaigned for the reserves to be abolished completely, arguing that they play no real role in monetary policy these days and simply handicap French banks by pushing up the cost of their funds.

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Jabal Amman-Rainbow Street, near Shokri Shasha School

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Cinema PHILADELPHIA

Tel: 634144

Back To The Future II

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Cinema Nabli Al Mashini Theatre

Tel: 675571

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Arabs of the year 2000 in cooperation with Yousef Yousef - Ali Abdul Aziz and a group of your favourite actors.

at 8:30 p.m. every evening. For reservation call tel.: 675571

Cinema RAINBOW

Tel: 625155

Yusra... Mahmoud Hamida in **AL SHARIS** (The Wild) (Arabic)

Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

10 injured N. Ireland car bomb

BELFAST (R) — Up to 10 people were injured Friday when a car bomb exploded outside a police station in Northern Ireland, police said. They said the bomb went off without warning outside the police base in County Tyrone. All the casualties were local residents but none were reported seriously injured. A total of 47 people have died in Northern Ireland so far this year in the political and civilian conflict over British rule of the province.

Marlene Dietrich to be buried in Berlin

PARIS (R) — Screen legend Marlene Dietrich, who spent her twilight years as a recluse in Paris, will be buried on May 16 in her native Berlin in a fatherland she shunned for decades after the Nazi tyranny, friends said. The actress, whose husky voice, high cheekbones and long legs fascinated cinema audiences for 60 years, died alone in her Paris flat Wednesday while leaving through family photographs. She was 90. She once summed up her love-hate relationship with Germany by saying: "When I die, I'd like to be buried in Paris. But I'd also like to leave my heart in England and in Germany — nothing." But a French Culture Ministry spokeswoman said that just before she died, Dietrich had told her grandson Pierre Riva she wanted to be buried next to her mother. Her lawyer, Jacques Kam, said her body would be taken from a funeral parlour in the Paris suburb of Nanterre and flown to Germany in a German military plane in the next few days. France will hold a memorial service for her at the Madeleine Church in Paris next Thursday.

2 killed in Peruvian prison battle

LIMA (R) — Only hours after Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori used his nearly-autocratic powers to order harsh prison terms for captured rebels, police clashed with Shining Path guerrilla inmates inside a maximum-security jail. The incident killed one policeman and a prisoner. Police said at least 16 policemen and 11 rebels, all of the women, were injured in a fierce battle with guns and bombs inside the women's cellblock at Canto Grande Prison in Lima. Some 650 Shining Path rebels, 250 of them women, are held there. Many are awaiting trial and have not been convicted.

Burma frees 8 more detainees

BANGKOK (R) — Burma's military junta said it released eight more political detainees, including a film director and a comedian. The releases brought to 66 the number of dissidents freed since army Commander General Than Shwe took over as head of the junta on April 23. The military government seized power after crushing a pro-democracy uprising in 1988 and diplomats say the releases are intended to improve its image abroad. Official Rangoon Radio, monitored in Bangkok, said those freed Thursday included film director Moe Tin, a former member of the main opposition National League for Democracy, and popular comedian Ah Yaing.

Malawi appeals for calm after riots

LUSAKA (R) — Malawi's President Kamuzu Banda urged residents to "behave like ladies and gentlemen" Friday after three days of anti-government rioting reportedly killed up to 38 people. In an appeal for calm on national radio, he said Malawians should resolve grievances with discussions rather than violence, residents said in telephone interviews with Reuters outside Malawi.

Kravchuk gets tour of Camp David

WASHINGTON (R) — Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk Wednesday joined a select group of world leaders when he was invited to accompany President George Bush to the presidential retreat Camp David. But Mr. Kravchuk got only a glimpse of the retreat in the Maryland mountains. He and Mr. Bush flew there from the White House by helicopter for a visit that lasted only two hours because of the president's trip to Los Angeles. Mr. Bush wanted to "simply show him the Camp and have a few private informal moments," White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said. Asked if Mr. Kravchuk's visit was designed to ensure diplomatic symmetry since Russian President Boris Yeltsin visited Mr. Bush's rustic hideaway last February, Mr. Fitzwater told reporters: "He's the leader of a large republic... I'll leave the symmetry to you."

Craxi denies part in Italian scandal

ROME (R) — Socialist leader Bettino Craxi Friday denied any involvement in a bribery scandal which began in his own party and is sweeping through Italy's entire political and industrial establishment. "It may sound naive, but I knew nothing about it," Mr. Craxi said of an alleged racket in public works contracts. Dozens of city councillors and businessmen have been held as the scandal grows — among them the head of Italy's biggest construction company. Most of those detained are based in the business capital Milan and several had direct links with the Socialists. Mr. Craxi blamed his enemies for manipulating the affair. "They have tried to destroy me but what have they achieved?" he said in an interview with La Stampa newspaper. The scandal has strengthened the hand of reformers demanding an overhaul of Italian politics since inconclusive elections a month ago left it with no government, no prime minister and no president.

Australian leader meets Dalai Lama

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Prime Minister Paul Keating met Friday with the Dalai Lama, ignoring complaints from China over his meeting with the Tibetan spiritual leader. After the meeting, Mr. Keating said the Australian government is considering allowing the Tibetan government-in-exile to set up an official information office in Australia. China has already complained through diplomatic channels over decisions by Mr. Keating and Foreign Minister Gareth Evans to meet the Dalai Lama. However, Australia has emphasised the meetings were private, not official, and were arranged because he is a religious leader and Nobel Peace Prize winner. At a briefing, government officials said Mr. Keating told the Dalai Lama that Australia would continue to recognise China's rule in Tibet but would do what it could to encourage a form of autonomy for Tibet.

Walesa asks for stronger powers

WARSAW (AP) — President Lech Walesa asked parliament Friday to provide him strong executive powers similar to those of France's president. In an emotional 25-minute speech, Walesa said that Poland is losing the faith of Western creditors and important economic reforms are not being addressed because of a highly factionalised parliament. He also called "unthinkable" in a democracy the recent founding of "defence committees" and "peasant battalions" by some groups dissatisfied with the authorities. "Our country needs a master of the house and an effective executive branch which, when it is weak and does not stand the test, may be reconstructed quickly," said Mr. Walesa. He urged the parliament to get to work on an interim "small constitution" that would set out clearly the powers of the president, the government and the parliament. Poland is still working under a patched-up version of the constitution passed in Stalinist times in 1952.

100 die in Sierra Leone mine accident

FREETOWN (R) — About 100 people were killed in Sierra Leone when an illegally-dug diamond mine caved in, police said Thursday. The accident happened Tuesday at Nyeya in the diamond-rich eastern region of the impoverished West African country, about 300 kilometres from the capital Freetown. Police said unlicensed miners dug a tunnel 10 metres deep which collapsed, burying those in the pit and trapping others who had been standing on the surface. Police said the dead included would-be rescuers. State radio said bodies were still being removed from the scene.

Armenia, Azerbaijan sign Karabakh ceasefire in Tehran

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — The Azerbaijan and Armenian leaders on Friday signed an Iranian-brokered agreement to end their bloody dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh, the official Iranian media reported.

But as Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosian and Yagub Mamedov, Azerbaijan's acting president, pledged from Tehran to honour the truce, Armenian forces were reported battling their way into an Azerbaijani-occupied town in the embattled province.

The agreement climaxed two days of summit talks supervised by Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani. State-run Tehran Radio and the Islamic Republic News Agency said it called for an immediate ceasefire and an end to the economic siege imposed on Nagorno-Karabakh.

Under the accord, Armenia and Azerbaijan will maintain direct contacts sponsored by Iran to resolve pending differences and normalise bilateral relations, Tehran Radio said.

It said the document also stressed the two sides resolve to have Iran help mediate any problems that might come up at a later stage.

Mr. Ter-Petrosian and Mr. Mamedov returned to their respective countries after the signing ceremony at Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani's office during which they shook hands and praised Iran, Tehran Radio said. More than 1,500 people have been killed in the 4-year-old conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh.

The province has been under the jurisdiction of Azerbaijan for 69 years, but is populated primarily by Armenians.

In Baku, the Azerbaijani News Agency Turan reported that Armenian forces Friday attacked Shusha, the only remaining Azerbaijani-occupied town inside Nagorno-Karabakh.

It quoted the Defence Ministry as saying the Armenians have seized a municipal prison in Shusha. It gave no other details.

Eldin Mehraliyev, an adviser to Azerbaijan's acting president, said Shusha and Agdam, a town inside Azerbaijan near the Nagorno-Karabakh border, "were subjected to massive shelling this morning."

"The Armenian groups were using heavy artillery, rocket launchers and military helicopters. Shusha is in the most difficult position. Communications with

the city have just been cut off," Mr. Mehraliyev said.

He said four Azerbaijanis were killed, but gave no details.

Gedam Bagdasaryan, press spokesman of the Nagorno-Karabakh parliament, said that the Armenians decided Thursday night that "defensive tactics were no longer effective."

"After that, the Defence Council of Nagorno-Karabakh overnight took the decision to launch an attack on firing positions of Azerbaijani artillery," he said.

"The Armenian Self Defence Forces have already seized the Azerbaijani villages of Dzhangasar, Dzhovhar and Lisagor around Shusha where rocket launchers firing at Stepanakert (the capital city) were situated and started shelling of Shusha using them," Mr. Bagdasaryan said.

Moscow's ITAR-TASS News Agency also confirmed the attack, quoting the Azerbaijani Defence Ministry. It said that at 11 a.m. (0700 GMT), four Armenian tanks broke into the city.

Earlier truce agreements, most of them Iranian-mediated, were short-lived.

But the Iranian News Agency

quoted Mr. Rafsanjani as saying "good progress" has since been achieved, giving the latest accord a better chance to survive.

If it does, it would give a considerable boost to Iran's efforts to extend its influence to the former Soviet republics along its border.

"With the goodwill shown by the two presidents and following efforts by their respective delegations and other friends, the ground has been prepared for peace," IRNA quoted Mr. Rafsanjani as saying after the signing.

"We will pursue our efforts to end the disputes in the region and to establish peace," he said.

"Fortunately, both countries are sincerely for peace and serious cooperation with each other and have expressed their regret over the loss of innocent lives in Karabakh," he said.

"We are fully ready to continue supervision by all means until peace and tranquility return to the two countries," he said, adding that an Iranian delegation will soon fly to the region.

Mr. Rafsanjani said he was interested in cooperating with other countries to promote peace in the former Soviet republics.

But the Iranian News Agency

N. Korea blames nuclear impasse on South

SEOUL (AP) — The North Korean delegation to high-level talks with South Korea departed Friday after blaming Seoul for the impasse on nuclear issues.

The southern delegation countered that South Korea will not soften its demands for nuclear inspections by countries, despite some progress made during the talks.

The prime ministers of both sides ended two days of talks

Thursday after agreeing to allow reunions of families separated by the post-World War II partition of Korea and to create commissions to work on military, economic and social exchanges.

But North Korean spokesman An Byong-su criticised South Korea for failing to reassure the North that U.S. nuclear weapons have been removed from South Korea. Mr. An did not explain why his nation has refused inter-

Korean nuclear inspections to allay such suspicions.

"We regret that South Korea failed to resolve our deep-rooted suspicions of nuclear weapons and nuclear bases which clearly exist in South Korea," An said in a statement.

Nuclear issues have been the most divisive issue between the two longtime rivals. South Korea fears North Korea is developing nuclear weapons, although North

Korea has denied it.

North Korea has agreed to allow inspections by the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency. They could begin by mid-June, but the North and South have not agreed on procedures for separate inter-Korean nuclear inspections.

A joint nuclear control commission is to meet for border talks on May 12.

NATO could decide soon on new peacekeeping role

BRUSSELS (R) — NATO could decide within the next few weeks to take on a new peacekeeping role in Europe, offering its military expertise and perhaps even troops for operations beyond its borders, an alliance official said Friday.

The official, who asked not to be identified, told reporters a decision could be taken at a meeting of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) foreign ministers in Oslo on June 4.

The fighting in Yugoslavia, Nagorno-Karabakh and the threat of new conflicts breaking out in an increasingly fragmented post-cold war Europe have given impetus to the idea, which would mark a major change in NATO policy.

But the question of whether the Western alliance should widen its role beyond the defence of its 16 members is highly sensitive and key details have yet to be worked out.

"It is my understanding that (this) will be discussed in Oslo, perhaps with some decision there," the official said.

He made clear that NATO could get involved with supplies, transport and troops only for peacekeeping operations. No nation has suggested the alliance should become involved in fighting to keep the peace outside its borders.

The Netherlands, backed by the United States, Britain and several other allies, has suggested putting NATO assets at the disposal of the 52-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

The CSCE, a forum for discussing security issues which links all European nations, the United States and Canada, has no armed forces of its own and no power to enforce decisions.

NATO, set up in 1949 to face a Soviet threat that has now collapsed, has the benefit of an integrated military structure — and is also trying to disarm critics who say it no longer has a major role to play.

Alliance ambassadors have been discussing the idea in recent days behind closed doors. The official said there was no agreement yet to go ahead with the idea, but added: "At this stage, nobody completely excludes some kind of involvement."

A decision in Oslo would be neatly timed for a summit of CSCE member states scheduled for Helsinki one month later.

"The Dutch and others really want to push this through, so that we can give the CSCE some military expertise and give NATO a valuable new mission — and it could all be sanctioned at the Helsinki summit," said one alliance diplomat.

Major's party sweeps to new poll success

LONDON (R) — Britain's Conservative Party Friday followed up its surprise win in general elections month ago with its best result in local government polls for 13 years.

With all but two results in from Thursday's voting for 207 local councils in England, Wales and Scotland, Prime Minister John Major's Conservatives had gained 309 seats on its 1988 result.

Labour, whose leader Neil Kinnock resigned in the wake of the party's fourth humiliating national defeat on April 9, lost 364 seats in a low turnout blamed on voter apathy.

Conservative Party Chairman

Chris Patten said the result built on "our terrific success in the general elections."

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) forecast the Conservatives won 45 per cent of the vote, with Labour taking 30 per cent and the minority Liberal Democrats on 19 per cent.

Labour acknowledged disappointment at the results, which saw the Conservatives sweeping to power on seven councils.

"Disappointment at the general election defeat means that low turnout is losing Labour hundreds of seats in our safest areas," said Labour campaign coordinator Jack Cunningham.

Twenty-three million people were eligible to vote. Overall turnout was about 40 per cent, normal for local elections, but slumped as low as 1.5 per cent in one area of south Wales — usually a Labour stronghold.

The voting took place in 36 English metropolitan authorities, 114 English Shire districts, four Welsh districts and all 53 Scottish districts. There was no voting in London.

In Scotland, Nationalist parties made 31 gains but failed to achieve a substantial breakthrough needed to boost their campaign for independence from England.

Thai premier defiant despite calls to quit

BANGKOK (R) — Embattled Prime Minister Suchinda Kraprayoon remained defiantly in office Friday despite Thailand's biggest public protests for two decades and threats by an opposition leader to fast to death unless he resigns.

Chamlong Srimuang, on the fifth day of a hunger strike, insisted he would let himself die unless Gen. Suchinda, an unelected former armed forces chief, resigned immediately. He ordered supporters not to revive him.

"I have asked people near me to maintain a strong will. If I collapse, do not touch me. Let me die. If I was assisted and survived, I would regret it for the rest of my life," Mr. Chamlong said in an open letter to a Bangkok protest rally.

"Brother Su (Suchinda) resigns or I die."

More than 120,000 people had flocked to Sanam Luang Park Thursday night to demand Gen. Suchinda's resignation and an end to army involvement in politics.

"Time is running out for the government. Chamlong will die soon," said Thanong Sangsuryajarn, a member of parliament for Mr. Chamlong's Palang Dharma Party.

Mr. Chamlong, speaking at Sanam Luang where Mr. Chamlong shifted his protest Thursday night, said thousands of people were heading into Bangkok from the provinces for Friday night's rally, which could be the largest yet.

Organisers said they expected the protests to carry on over the weekend.

Political analysts said revered King Bhumibol Adulyadej may intervene soon to ease tension. Hundreds of academics and members of political parties petitioned him Thursday, asking him to ensure the army does not break up the protests.

"Chances of the army moving in to crush the protests are declining in the face of strong anti-military feeling... Suchinda has few choices but to compromise, probably by letting someone friendly to the army replace him," said Thammasat University lecturer Pichit Likhitkijomboon.

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Bush finds frustration, anger in Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES (R) — President George Bush found anger, frustration and fear as he witnessed at first hand the havoc created by three days of rioting in Los Angeles.

"Protect us from the people who are attacking innocent civilians," Korean-American Young Choi told Mr. Bush as he toured the city's Koreatown neighbourhood Thursday.

She said she was worried the president would be "concerned about Beverly Hills" and the rich who live there without taking care of average Americans.

Another Korean-American, Helen Lim, fought back tears as she told Mr. Bush: "Ten or 20 years of hard work went down the drain overnight. There are a lot of people who lost and do not have any way to go on."

Mr. Bush told the woman he identified with people's suffering. "These comments you have made sensitise all of us to the need to do our best and to move as fast as possible," he added.

Koreatown was a prime target during last week's riots because many Korean-Americans own the stores where blacks do their daily shopping. Blacks are resentful over the Asians' business success.

The Korean Emergency Relief Task Force said Korean businesses sustained \$378 million in losses at 2,125 stores and restaurants.

The riots, which claimed 58 lives and injured more than 2,000 people, erupted when a mostly white jury cleared four police officers of wrongdoing in the beating of black motorist Rodney King.

Mr. Bush was expected to outline his response to the racial crisis during a speech Friday.

Aides said he would not present dramatic news proposals, but instead discuss earlier programmes such as creation of enterprise zones to encourage business development in poor areas which Congress has failed to enact.

Earlier Thursday, Mr. Bush told worshippers at Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church during a multi-racial prayer service that the city's suffering would be reversed.

"This city will rebuild, and I am confident that new opportunities will arise," he said.

Mr. Bush saw the skeletal remains of various buildings scorched by rioters and expressed "shock and dismay" at the scenes.

He promised "justice will prevail" against the rioters and even in the case of Rodney King. In a separate development, administration sources said Thursday, President Bush is almost certain to attend a United Nations Earth Summit in Brazil next month now that the United States appears assured of key

Fighting rages again in Sarajevo

SARAJEVO (R) — Fighting between Muslims and Serbs raged across the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo Friday and local radio reports said many people had been killed or wounded.

The Yugoslav News Agency Tanjug said explosions and gunfire rocked the city after 6 a.m. (0400 GMT) following a respite since shortly after midnight.

Violence erupted again in Sarajevo Thursday evening after a two-day lull in the battle between the Serb minority who oppose Bosnian independence and the majority Muslim and Croat communities.

Sarajevo Radio appealed to ambulance teams to go to the suburb of Hrasnica to treat a large number of casualties, Tanjug reported.

Peace talks between Bosnian leaders and the Serb-led federal army were due to resume at noon (1000 GMT).

U.N. envoy Marrack Goulding who visited Sarajevo this week said in Belgrade Thursday that Bosnia was "a tragedy on a major scale" and it was "extraordinarily difficult to identify who is in political control."

He condemned "the indiscriminate and random shelling of civilian targets" in Bosnia but said he believed Yugoslav claims that the bombardments were being carried out by Serb irregulars and not by the Yugoslav army.

Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, who denies Serbia instigated the fighting, said: "No one in Bosnia is blameless, no side is innocent, the tragedy should be stopped immediately."

Mr. Milosevic urged Mr. Goulding to send a U.N. peace force to Bosnia and appealed to the United Nations to play an impartial role in solving the entire Yugoslav crisis.

Political analysts believe Yugoslavia is trying to boost the United Nations role in order to cut down the influence of the European Community, which it believes is prejudiced against it.

In Helsinki, European security conference officials met Friday to discuss action against the Yugoslav delegation, short of complete suspension, over the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

A committee of senior officials of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) met briefly and called another session for later in the day — after informal talks on a compromise.

The United States, leading demands that Yugoslavia be suspended from all CSCE activities, had agreed to compromise, and there appeared to be broad agreement on some form of less severe action against Belgrade, delegates reported.

"I think we will probably reach agreement on some sort of suspension of Yugoslavia," John C. Kornblum, head of the U.S. delegation, said.

"We have virtual agreement among a large, large number of states that... a suspension decision should be taken," he told Reuters. There are few points left outstanding and we will obviously be working on them today."

COLUMN

Fergie returns after month away from husband

LONDON (R) — Britain's Duchess of York, estranged wife of Prince Andrew, returned to England Friday after a month-long holiday in the Far East to contemplate her future. The Daily Mail newspaper said the duchess, known as Fergie, was convinced her six-year marriage to Queen Elizabeth's son was over. It quoted a close friend as saying Fergie would tell Andrew when they are reunited at the £5 million (\$8.9 million) home in southern England that she "has no desire to remain there longer than is necessary." The flame-haired duchess shipped out of the country with her two young daughters a month ago to escape the press furor over her decision to start talks about a formal separation from 32-year-old Andrew. She arrived at Heathrow Airport from Jakarta Friday looking sunburned and relaxed. She gave a cheery smile as she posed for photographers with daughters Beatrice and Eugenie before being driven away under police escort. Some reports have said Fergie will move out of her marital home to a five-bedroomed cottage a few miles away while she and the prince sort out details of their separation. While Fergie was abroad, the queen's only daughter, Princess Anne, obtained a quiet divorce from her husband Mark Phillips ending 18 years of marriage. It was only the second divorce among the inner circle of the British monarchy since the 16th century.

Costly Japan seeks slogan to lure tourists

TOKYO (R) — To win a holiday for two in Japan just devise a slogan to lure tourists to one of the world's costliest holiday destinations, but forget about the clichés of Mount Fuji, cherry blossoms and geisha girls. The Japan National Tourist Organisation launched a worldwide contest to find the best slogan. "Japan deserves more visitors," spokesman Tsunekaki Iki told a news conference. "We want to promote the understanding of this country through tourism." He said the current number of visitors to Japan, 3.5 million a year, was far too low. The travel industry feels too much emphasis is placed on either the country's formidable economic success, or the over-used symbols of Mount Fuji, blossoms and geisha girls. The last slogan, "Japan — another world to discover," seemed to miss the target. Mr. Iki said. The prize for doing better is air tickets and a holiday for two in Tokyo and Kyoto, the cultural treasure house of western Japan. "Neighbouring countries already have slogans such as 'fascinating Malaysia' or 'city elegance,'" Mr. Iki said. "We need a slogan that best captures the essence of our attraction," he added. The contest is open to all. The tourist organisation expects several hundred thousand entries by the end of July deadline. The result will be announced by the end of October. Organisers are looking for a catchy English phrase that can be used on posters, travel brochures and promotional goods.

New York's Guardian Angels watch over Sydney

SYDNEY (R) — New York's volunteer crime-fighters, the Guardian Angels, started watching over Sydney train commuters Thursday despite being told by police they were not wanted. "Should we actually come across crime... of any kind we will physically intervene until the New South Wales police get there," Curtis Silwa, American founder of the Guardian Angels, told reporters. Four Angels boarded Sydney's suburban trains and started patrolling stations and car parks. Mr. Silwa, in Australia to start a local chapter of the Guardian Angels, said Sydney's crime was not on a par with New York, which he described as the "armpit of the cesspool of crime," but similar to London which has Guardian Angel patrols. He said 82 per cent of 750 Sydney people surveyed by the Angels over the past four days supported volunteer policing. However, New South Wales (NSW) Police Minister Ted Pickering has described the Guardian Angels as "loony rambos." "We don't need your sort of assistance in NSW, and as far as we're concerned you can go home," Mr. Pickering said. "If they step one inch outside the law we'll come down on them like a ton of bricks," he said.

Police stand over a group of handcuffed looting suspects in Los Angeles

concessions on a global warming pact.

"It is virtually certain he will go," said one official in Washington. "He's made it clear he would like to."

A final announcement is expected to be made next week, after administration officials have been able to study final documents that will be completed this week in New York at the United Nations, officials said.

Mr. Bush, who was in Los Angeles touring riot-damaged

sections of the city, was described by sources as wanting to attend the summit on environmental issues.

Senior aides have been bitterly divided over his going to any part of the June 3-14 convulse, but concessions by other nations on a global warming treaty have tipped the scales in favour of his going to Rio De Janeiro.

"He wouldn't be there very long," one official said of the summit. "It would be very quick."

Jeffrey L. K...